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X-MEN

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THE AMAZING
SPIDER-MAN

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The Fall Crossover The Animated Series

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There's no reason your favorite comic book should ever have to be canceled.

Every title has an audience — a group of people who take great pleasure from reading that series, issue after issue. Those are the folks who, with their purchases, keep the title alive.

Estimates place the United States population at about 250 million men, women and children. Fewer than half of those people buy books. If one tenth of the population read comics, we'd have 25 million readers, and if everyone who was able read comics, then every single title would outsell the X-MEN. Every comic would be a sales success, and your favorites wouldn't be forced off the stands.

How do we begin to create this dream audience? First, encourage people to read. Comic book fans are lucky — we know the excitement, adventure and sheer pleasure that comes of reading books and comics. Sadly, half of our neighbors miss out on the fun.

Next, encourage your friends, those who have interests similar to yours, to try comics. Give them as presents, from a Spider-Man trade paperback to a BARBIE subscription. You can do most of your gift shopping in your local comic book store!

Then comes the point where you reap the benefits of your own efforts. Talk your friends and relations into reading your favorite titles. Actively lobby for your favorite heroes, and you'll be taking a part in deciding their fates. If your favorite series has a big enough audience, it's safety is assured.

You hold the power in your hands.

On a different note, now that the new MARVEL AGE has begun to realize some of its potential, I'd like to take the time to thank a couple of the folks who helped us out along the way, including Steve Alexandrov, Bonnie Berryman, KC Carlson, Bobbie Chase, Chris Cooper, Tom DeFalco, Chris Ebel, Dawn Geiger, Alison Gill, Mark Gruenwald, Sven Larsen, Dave McDonnell, Randy Meredith, Fabian Nicleza, Jeanne Park, Virginia Romita, Millie Shuriff, Shi, Valerie Stewart and Maggie Thompson.

I'm sure I've forgotten some folks this time around — don't worry, you'll have your shot at infamy. In the meanwhile, thanks to everyone who has helped us get this far.

— Steve Saffel
Editor

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UP FRONT

ITEM! Night Thrasher goes solo this August in his own four issue limited series. Taking a break from the New Warriors, Thrasher will be on a six month long hiatus from the book beginning with NEW WARRIORS #28. It is during those six months that the events chronicled in the limited series take place. Written by Fabian Nicieza (X-FORCE, NOMAD) and penciled by Dave Hoover, the limited series, titled "Four Control," is, as Fabian put it, "a kidnapping mystery, political espionage thriller."

The action begins with the kidnapping of Taylor Foundation president, Jonathan Chord. Suspecting one of the four members of the Taylor Foundation Board of Directors, Night Thrasher begins investigating each of them. Along the way, he discovers that the philanthropic foundation his father founded has become involved in shady business dealings. Determined to set everything right, Night Thrasher resolves to gain control of the company. But, before he can, he must first find the kidnapped Chord, learn the identity of the kidnapers and battle several super-powered villains including: Bengal, the new Tantrum (from WONDER MAN), Lotus and X-FORCE arch-enemy Gideon.

"Four Control" is just as much a tale of self-discovery as it is of crimi-



nal-discovery. "Night Thrasher has been manipulated by people and events his whole life," Fabian explained, "now he's taking charge." "Four Control," refers to the four corners of control in life: strength, money, power and compassion. Faced with four suspects, each loosely representing one of the four corners, Night Thrasher must understand the four corners of his own life and reconcile the sins of his past before he can identify the guilty party. "We learn more about *him* as he learns more about *himself*," Fabian disclosed, "in the end, he learns that in life not everything is black and white, sometimes there are shades of gray."

One of the most eagerly awaited elements of the limited series is the

debut of Night Thrasher's new, redesigned armor. Featuring more advanced capabilities and weaponry, the armor includes built in knives, guns, telescopic sights, radar/sonar detection systems and a piton-spike shooting mechanism that allows Night Thrasher to climb virtually anything. The highlight is a liquid crystal camouflage feature that allows the armor to change color so as to blend in with the background.

Fabian summed up the limited series: "NEW WARRIOR fans have seen Night Thrasher develop into more than some revenge-seeking vigilante. The limited series fleshes him out further in a self-contained, action, adventure, intrigue story. New fans don't have to know a lot about him to enjoy this story."

ITEM! "Blood and Glory," the special three issue limited series teaming up the Punisher and Captain America, has been re-scheduled to begin in August. When this explosive pair teams up to follow a trail of corruption that may lead them to the doors of the White House itself, you can be sure it'll be the hottest display of fireworks since the Fourth of July.



ITEM! Death. That is the central theme of the new Spider-Man special *Soul of the Hunter*. The sequel to the enormously popular *KRAVEN'S LAST HUNT* trade paperback, *SOUL OF THE HUNTER* reunites the creative team of J.M. DeMatteis (*SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN*). Mike Zeck and Bob McLeod for a 48-page psychological journey into the guilt-ridden mind of Peter Parker. Haunted by the ghost of Kraven, Peter has to come to grips with the terrifying memory of his own "death" at the mad hunter's hands as well as his own guilt over not being able to save his foe. Peter must learn to accept death and embrace life before losing his own sanity and Kraven's immortal soul. Available in August, *SOUL OF THE HUNTER* could very well be the most talked about Spider-Man saga of the year.



ITEM! The Moon Knight Special on sale in August is a 48-page blast from the past treat for long time Moon Knight fans. Written by Moon Knight co-creator Doug Moench and penciled by Art Nichols, the story entitled, "Explosion at the Center of a Madman's Crown," features a special guest appearance by Shang-Chi (The Master of Kung Fu), a character who hasn't appeared with Moon Knight since the 1970's. Moon Knight editor, Joey Cavalieri, says, "It's a real treat for old time Moon Knight and Shang Chi fans, and I happen to be both."

Investigating the theft of industrial secrets from Spectorcorp, Moon Knight identifies the culprit as a member of a mysterious religious cult named the Golden Dawn. While pursuing the bizarre cult, Moon Knight encounters Shang-Chi, who is also seeking their whereabouts. Joining forces, the two journey to the cult's hideout on Mordillo's Island, a deadly maze of lethal traps that die-hard fans haven't seen since *MASTER OF KUNG FU* #35.

Once there, Moon Knight and Shang Chi get, as Joey said, "everything but the kitchen sink thrown at them all at once." That "everything" is an automated army

that includes, "ninjas, robots, guys in funny suits, robot mummies and mechanical bats." Armed with nothing but their fists and wits, Moon Knight and Shang-Chi battle their way through these legions of evil to reach the fortress at the center of the island. There, they discover the island's villainous cult master.

Since taking over the reins as editor of Moon Knight, Joey has been working to redefine the character. "There has been a perception that Moon Knight isn't a part of the mainstream Marvel Universe," Joey explained, "by moving him to New York and featuring several upcoming guest stars like Dr. Doom, Reed Richards and Dr. Strange, not to mention a four part Infinity War crossover, we're trying to change that." How do the fans feel about this? "Sales are up, fan mail has doubled and response has been very positive," Joey replied.

Although nervous about fan reaction, Cavalieri is confident in the new Moon Knight. "We're expecting a veritable firestorm of fan feedback," said Cavalieri. "Moon Knight is no longer a distant star in the Marvel Universe," he said, "we've brought him to the center."



ITEM! What has long purple hair, wears a bright red and blue striped clown's outfit and battles alien invaders from another dimension with a tent stake mallet? It's the wild and wacky, Slapstick, Marvel's adolescent, crime-fighting answer to Roger Rabbit. This off-the-wall, new character premieres this September in the *SLAPSTICK* limited series, a four part saga chronicling the adventures of the puerile prankster co-created by writer Len Kaminski (*IRON MAN*) and penciler James Fry (*NOMAD* limited series).

Slapstick's true identity is teenage class clown, Steve Harmon. Upon discovering an alien invasion force masquerading as a traveling carnival, a well meaning but clumsy Steve accidentally falls into their inter-dimensional portal and is somehow transformed into an indestructible, practical-joking champion of justice. Now the clowning Steve must learn to use his incredible powers to balance the awesome responsibilities of saving the world and passing his mid-terms.

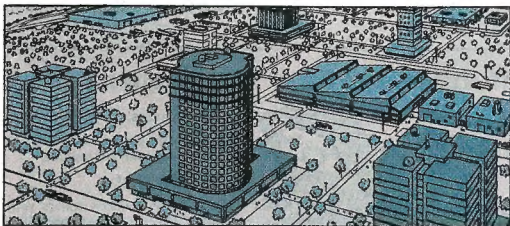
— Matt Morra

OBITUARIES

ANTHONY E. "TONY" STARK



STARK — Anthony Edward, died Saturday, July 11 at St. Matthew's hospital in Palo Alto, California after a long illness. Humanitarian, inventor, and financial genius, Mr. Stark was the son of Howard Stark, the founder of Stark Industries, a company known for weapons and munitions manufacturing during World War II. Inheriting the company at age 21 and renaming it Stark International, Anthony Stark transformed it into a multimillion dollar conglomerate. After losing control of the company in a hostile takeover, he eventually founded Stark Enterprises, one of the nation's leading manufacturers of high-tech computers and electronics. An acknowledged scientific and financial genius, Stark will long be remembered as one of the greatest minds of our time, whose accomplishments rival those of Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein and Reed Richards. A renowned philanthropist, his many charitable contributions included technological and financial support of the super hero and peace keeping groups including SHIELD, The Avengers and Avengers West Coast. Memorial services will be held for close friends only at an undisclosed location.

STARK ENTERPRISES
PRICES PLUMMET

The business world was rocked yesterday by the announcement of the death of Anthony Stark, founder, chairman and CEO of Stark Enterprises. On the heels of the announcement, the Stock Exchange reported a 15 point drop in the price for Stark Enterprises common stock as nervous investors panicked over the unsure future of the industrial giant. The stock listed a closing price of only \$22.50 per share: the lowest price in the company's history.

In a hastily called press conference, board members assured the financial community that Mr. Stark's death will in no way change daily operations. Spokewoman Marcy Pearson said, "It'll be business as usual." But to many investors who saw Stark as not only the head, but mind, body and soul of

the company, Stark Enterprises may well be destined for the same fate as its founder. Says one industry insider, "SE is a solid company, but, with the falling stock price, the burden of the recently acquired Stane International, and without Stark at the helm, it could easily fall prey to a hostile takeover. Corporate buzzards are already circling overhead."

Anonymous reports indicate that one well-known corporate raider has already expressed such interest — Stark's old adversary, Justin Hammer. A spokesman for Hammer denies the rumor. Said the spokesman, "Mr. Hammer is greatly saddened by the loss of Mr. Stark and at the present time has no plans for a leveraged buy-out of his company." Another raider with a possible interest in SE is business man Edwin Chord.

(cont. on p. 45, col. 2)

Friends Mourn

The untimely death of wealthy financier and international jet-setter Anthony "Tony" Stark has brought forth an outpouring of sympathy from his friends in the super hero community.

Gathering at both East and West Coast locations of Avengers' Mansion, super-powered mourners of Stark were devastated by the grim news. On hand was the USAgent, who commented, "Yeah, he was an okay guy, supplying the government with munitions and that sort of thing. But he seemed to go a little soft as time went on. Tough guy to figure, I guess."

Iron Man, an Avenger and Stark's own bodyguard, was unavailable for comment.

On the east coast, Avengers leader Captain America told reporters, "Without Tony's help, there never could have been an Avengers. The world owes him a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid." Stark's close friend and confidant, James Rhodes, was reportedly in seclusion and not available for comment. SHIELD Director Col. Nicholas Fury, who openly disagreed with Stark when the millionaire announced that he would cease munitions production, also declined comment.

A bachelor his whole life, Stark leaves behind a vast fortune with no close relatives as heirs. This has led to widespread speculation that

(continued on page 48)



Ted McKeever and the Terror of Technology

In one of the most daring looks at the Age to Come, Ted McKeever borrowed heavily from the Book of Revelations to postulate the advent of Armageddon in his critically acclaimed *Metropol*. Now, as dramatic as the events that unfolded in that series were, McKeever promises even more surprises in his dramatic sequel, *Metropol A.D.*, beginning in September.

"I don't see the Christian religion as being the only one with an accurate prediction for the future," says McKeever. "I don't see any one tradition as having that. I see them all having elements in them that cross over, and they're all very interesting and valuable sources for making predictions." Among the futuristic fears McKeever will explore is a fear of the inherent terror in technology gone mad, a fear we live with daily. In *Metropol A.D.*, a city on the edge of civilization, has its technology controlled by supernatural evil, while the heroes and humans are subjugated to a simpler, more primitive existence. Against these odds, a ragtag group of Angels and human refugees will attempt to take back their world from the edge of the abyss—or push that world more fully over the edge.

"It seems to me sometimes, that instead of taking things and making them better," says McKeever, "(technology) seems to be a little out of control, taking people out of the realm of human contact."

Exploring one possible end result of that removal, and possibly offering the beginnings of a solution, will be a main theme in the adventure that is *Metropol A.D.*

We see trends toward the future in the status quo daily, promising advance, and promising trouble, and periodically fulfilling those promises. But while there is reason to fear the future, there is as much reason to look forward to it, for the wonders it will bring, with both eyes open, and both hands on the wheels of our own destiny.

Epicenter Quote of the month:

"It seems today that people are too willing to accept the way things go.
Too few are willing to question."
—Ted McKeever.

Epicenter

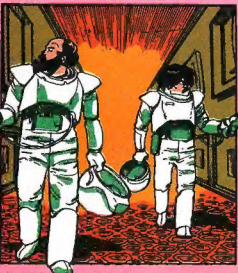
The Top Six Reasons to Fear the Future

1) Time travel makes mint comic collecting obsolete.

Then, perish forbid, comics will have to be judged on their quality, rather than their collectability.

2) Strange corpses in deep space.

Best known for his epic *Akira*, Katsuhiro Otomo's new series *Memories* promises another tension-filled bittersweet adventure on the fringes of the future. Three astronomical mercenaries investigate a disturbance in space, to find themselves drawn into a mysterious woman's web of technological vengeance.



3) Illiteracy Abolished.

When even businessmen with comics on their morning commute will take the mystique out of reading comics. When asked, they'll claim to be doing some stock market research...

4) Future War.

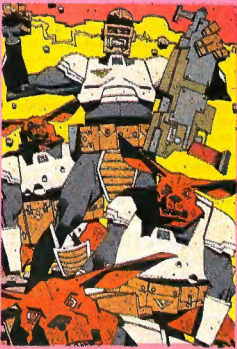
Thomas Jefferson wrote, "I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past," just after the horrors of the Revolutionary War. But War, in man's history, seems to be the one mistake we're doomed to repeat, and quite likely will bring with him into the worlds that lie ahead. In *Alien Legion: One Planet at a Time*, the future worlds of the Alien Legion are entering into their first full scale war in nearly a century, fighting an invasion by an evil, near mythical race known as the Vreel, who will turn a dozen worlds, and the Legion itself, inside out.

5) Fashion Furies.

Oxygen masks and radiation suits will clash hopelessly with 90's fashions.

6) Collectible Crash.

In the future, random comics with holograms, die-cuts, multiple and glow-in-the-dark covers may spontaneously combust, thus insuring the value of the remainder of the print-run.



Mark's

REMARKS

A very good acquaintance of mine works in the fashion industry, so I've had access to material describing the inner workings of that multi-billion dollar business. I was astounded to learn that there meets once a year somewhere in Europe a group informally known as the Color Council, and it's their responsibility to determine all the acceptable colors for the next year's fashion line from all the major manufacturers (and probably most of the minor ones as well.) This answered one of life's minor mysteries to me—why it was possible to find new clothes that match and complement each other so well.

Here was a group of individuals who had taken it upon themselves to control what the rest of our "free" society would be allowed to buy!

But it shocked me, too. Here was a group of individuals who had taken it upon themselves to control what the rest of our "free" society would be allowed to buy! What if, for example, I hated mauve and this year mauve was one of my only options?! Perhaps you can appreciate my Orwellian concern.

So what does this have to do with the price of comic books in Antarctica? Glad you asked. . . Sometimes, looking at the fashions in the contemporary comics medium—I'm talking about fashions in writing and art styles not clothing, I wonder if there is not a secret council I'm not aware of determining what the fashion is. This is not popularly determined—determined by the people, the fans, the readers—let's not kid ourselves. Fellow writers are the biggest influence on other writers, artists on other artists. And for all I know they hold a secret meeting to decide the style of the year—a meeting I'm never invited to!

What style of drawing? What style of writing? What is the current fashion? The current fashion in artwork features central pinup pose panels on almost every page



Photograph by Henry O.

instead of clear linear panel-to-panel storytelling, an exaggerated almost baroque approach to the human figure (what the previous fashion of "realistic" comic artists would term "cartoony"), and an emphasis on intricate rendering and linework. I am certain you can think of several popular artists whose work sports these characteristics, so I need not name them here. Those whose style doesn't fit the above are just not as popular as those whose style does, regardless of the quality of their work. That's just the way it is with fashion.

THE BOSSMEN

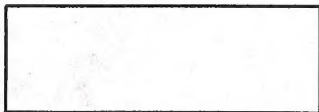
by RICK PARKER



Okay, now writing. The current fashion in comic book writing can be summed up in a single phrase. . . first person narrative captions. First person, as anyone who's taken a lit class can tell you is written as if a character in the story is narrating it and uses the first person pronoun "I" a lot. Furthermore in this particular style, what was once the province of the thought balloon



is now put in captions



to different effect.

Thought balloons have immediacy. They are transcriptions of a character's inner monologue as it goes on. First person captions — even ones written in present tense — are less immediate, and connote narrative distance from the event portrayed. In a caption, there is the sense of an audience that is listening in, an audience to whom certain things are being explained. For instance, were Wolverine to think, "I'm the best there is at what I do," in a thought balloon, it would seem a bit ludicrous, like he felt the need to give himself a pep talk or something. Yet when the same sentence is placed in a caption, it's no longer ludicrous, it's Wolverine telling the audience something he feels like explaining.

Occasionally today's stylistically fashionable writers will try variations on first person narration. One such variation is multiple first person narration, where different characters take turns narrating portions of the same story. This can be a trifle confusing for the reader who has to identify "whose head am I in this time." A variation is shifting stream-of-consciousness multiple first person narration, where various captions have various points of view and it's not that important who is expressing a certain sentiment or idea, only that that sentiment or idea come across at that particular juncture.

What was in fashion before today's writers fell in love with first person? Omniscient third person narration, written as if there was an all-seeing, all-knowing person observing the story that's unfolding whose job it is to tell the reader what he or she cannot see in the pictures or read in the dialog. Some writers take their omniscient narration matter-of-factly, others embellish it by trying to wax poetically whenever possible, and still others adopt a hip, trendy, smart alecky tone so that the off-panel narrator almost becomes a character unto him or herself.

In the '70's there was yet another writing style in fashion, the second person narration, a style characterized by the second person pronoun "you." In this style, writers were constantly addressing the character ("Your name is Iron Fist and you have sweaty palms") in a way that was supposed to make the readers identify with the character being addressed. Were I a character in a book written that way, I would have found it pretty annoying to have someone describing my actions and passing judgment on same all the time.

So, being a comic writer myself, what do I think of the current fashion in comic writing? I think all comic book writing styles are derived from writing styles for other media. A novel, for instance, is purely verbal; for the most part there is no actual illustration of images. Comic writers who share novelists' sensibilities write captions. A play is partly verbal (dialog) and partly visual (actors' performances). Comic writers who believe they share playwrights' sensibilities write dialog and avoid captions. A movie is primarily visual, with comparatively little dialog and usually no narration. Comic writers who believe they share screenwriters' sensibilities write action and avoid captions and dialog except where necessary.

The fashion in comic writing today is writing in the style of the novelist. My preference in writing comics is writing in the style of the playwright or screenwriter. I avoid captions whenever possible. I believe the ideal comic story should be told through a character's actions and not through the narrator's commentary on those actions. I'm hardly the originator of this approach. Some writers I know have been using it for years no matter what the fashion is.

I'm not saying my style is better than anyone else's, I'm just letting you know the philosophy behind it. When it comes to comic writing, my friends, I'm afraid I cannot abide by the standards of the fashion council. Am I fated to be a fashion rebel for life? I don't think so.

When it comes to comic writing, my friends, I'm afraid I cannot abide by the standards of the fashion council.

I think cinematic traditions will eventually overtake novelistic traditions in the comics medium, and more writers will adopt my philosophy. Till then, I'm just going to do my own thing — at least until the fashion council catches up with me.



— Mark Gruenwald

CABLE.

THAT'S ALL PEOPLE EVER ASK ME ABOUT AND MORE. WHEREVER I GO, IT'S NOTHING BUT "CABLE, CABLE CABLE"!?

I TELL 'EM, "SURE I WATCH CABLE - WHERE DO YOU THINK I GET SUCH GREAT DEALS ON GUNNY KNIVES?"

SOMETIMES STORM STOPS BY AND WE TURN ON THE WEATHER CHANNEL - I ADMIT, FOR ME, IT CAN GET PRETTY BORING PRETTY QUICKLY, BUT NOT FOR THAT WOMAN! SHE CAN WATCH FOR HOURS AND HOURS AND HOURS!

I'VE ALSO FOUND THAT WHEN I WANT TO KEEP TRACK OF THE ACTIVITIES OF KNOWN LIARS, CHEATS, AND THIEVES, THE SOLUTION IS SIMPLE -

~ I TUNE IN C-SPAN!

YESSIR, I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO WITHOUT CABLE TELEVISION. Y'KNOW, IF -

==NOT
CABLE TELEVISION.

huh?
FOLKS AREN'T ASKING YOU ABOUT CABLE TELEVISION, THEY'RE ASKING YOU ABOUT ME, **CABLE**, THE MOST EXCITING NEW MUTANT (YOU SHOULD PARDON THE EXPRESSION) TO COME ALONG SINCE. WELL, SINCE YOU, WOLVERINE!

heh.

oh.

WELL, THAT'S DIFFERENT. GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO KEEP THAT IN MIND THE NEXT TIME I'M ASKED.

GOOD IDEA.

Oh, AND BUZ I'VE BEEN THROUGH THIS, AND BELIEVE ME, YOU SHOULD TRY NOT TO LET THIS SUDDEN POPULARITY YOU'RE ENJOYING AFFECT YOU TOO MUCH!

eh?

AFTER ALL, YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO WIND UP WITH A **SWELLED HEAD**, WOULD YOU?..

..ON SECOND THOUGHT, ON **YOU** IT MIGHT NOT BE SUCH A BAD IDEA!..

X-MEN

X-CUTIONER'S SONG



Quay Hesse

A TALE BEST SERVED COLD

"It's basically a story about revenge, and 'revenge' has its repercussions." Thus spoke Bob Harras, the editor of the entire line of X-Titles, about the upcoming X-Men fall crossover storyline, "X-Cutioner's Song," a 12-part saga that will run consecutively within the pages of Uncanny X-Men, X-Factor, X-Men and X-Force beginning in September. "The story starts with Uncanny X-Men #294 (shipping September 1) and will end in X-FORCE #18 (shipping November 24), the culmination of this classic."

It's basically a story about revenge, and 'revenge' has its repercussions.

"Tom DeFalco came into my office one day and told me to do a major fall crossover." Bob continued with a laugh. "Actually, readers familiar with any of the X-Books know that, since Cable's debut in the final cataclysmic issues of The New Mutants, the mysteries surrounding him have increased and progressed in such a manner as to lead logically into a major storyline involving all the X-Books."

To coordinate such an undertaking as integrating four different titles over the span of three months, "a logistical nightmare," as Bob described it, he decided to conduct what is referred to as an "X-Summit."

A GATHERING OF TITANS

The very first X-Summit met a couple of years ago during the San Diego Convention. Since Chris Claremont, Jim Lee and Whilce Portacio were guests at the show and were the current teams on The Uncanny X-Men and X-Factor, Bob decided to get them all together and map out that coming year's stories. That particular line of stories led to the premiere of X-Men #1, a book that sold, according to Bob, "seven million fun-filled copies."

For this year's X-Summit Bob, "got the new guys together. There were Peter David, Fabian Nicieza, Scott Lobdell, Suzanne (Gaffney) and myself," Bob explained, "and I think Terry Kavanagh from Excalibur came along for the heck of it, to see if there was anything in the Fall crossover that could have ramifications in that title."

The Summit began in an Italian restaurant a block or two from the Marvel offices and proved to be a positive experience for everyone involved. "I liked the summit," Bob explained. "We were able to explore the upcoming year's stories, so that they would flow more smoothly between the titles and lead logically to 'X-Cutioner's Song'."

"These summit meetings are good," Bob continued. "You can have all the books reacting of one another. There is a focus to the X-Titles. And the summits do not have to occur only when there is a major crossover happening. I'd like to do this on a constant level."

"ELEANOR, I THINK YOU'RE SWELLINOR

Peter David, the scribe of X-Factor, described the X-Summit in a slightly different way. "It's the creative equivalent of root canal," he said good-

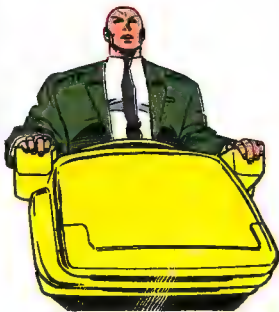
naturally. "Everyone is crowded together to work the storyline out and, of course, people are concerned with their own characters. Whenever a particular writer's character ballooned, the other writers would jump on him."

Peter figured that the "conversation in the restaurant must have sounded strange to anyone sitting nearby. . . 'So are they in the blue area of the moon or aren't they? And what does the Watcher feel about all this?'"

From the restaurant, the group headed back to the Marvel offices to continue hammering out the details. Peter related how there wasn't a conference room available. "We crammed into Tom DeFalco's office and got rid of him. Now, Tom's office isn't big to begin with, especially now that Mark Gruenwald is sharing it with him. Things started getting a bit punchy and soon the summit turned into an episode of 'McLaughlin'."



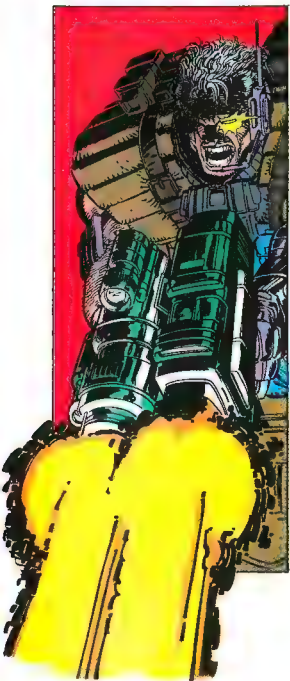
It's the creative equivalent of root canal.



With the continuing build-up of tension surrounding Cable, particularly within the ranks of X-Force and the ultra-secret division of SHIELD (of which the character G.W. Bridge is a key figure) the time seemed ripe to present Cable's story. Of course, once Bob had the story foundation for this monumental undertaking in place, he needed the catalyst to actually set the gears in motion. That catalyst is Stryfe.

"The character of Stryfe presented itself as the character (Assistant Editor) Suzanne and I felt could be pivotal to this whole storyline, because he is the new kid on the X-Force block. Stryfe's been in the background since the beginning and, although he hasn't done all that much, we know that he is planning something big. So we decided to bring Stryfe out onto center stage as the big menace that would bring together all the X-Teams and place X-Force into closer continuity with the other X-Titles."

So we decided to bring Stryfe out onto center stage as the big menace that would bring together all the X-Teams. . .



Readers know that Cable and Stryfe are connected in mysterious ways. This connection went deeper than simply a shared history when it was revealed in the final issue of New Mutants that Stryfe looks amazingly similar to Cable. So much so that Weapon X (Kane), upon spying Stryfe's visage without his helmet, erroneously reported to G.W. Bridge that Cable was Stryfe.

"Through 'X-Cutioner's Song,' the readers will get to finally know about these characters," Bob continued, "And the effects of these revelations on those particular X-Men who are connected to Cable and Stryfe; characters who will remain nameless until the fall crossover comes out."

Although "X-Cutioner's Song" commences in "Uncanny X-Men" #294, the setup begins elsewhere. "The preamble to all this is the (two part) Cable Limited Series," explained Bob. "Cable leaves the team (X-Force) before the crossover begins, to go into his own little adventure, then in the first issue of 'X-Cutioner's Song,' he returns to warn them (the X-Teams) of what he has learned."

Within the limited series, Cable confronts the ghosts of his past, a past fans were given a glimpse of in X-Force #8. There will be appearances by Weapon X, G.W. Bridge and Stryfe. "The limited series isn't exactly connected to the fall crossover, but it does set certain things up. The first issue comes out in August, followed by the second in September," Bob continued. "'X-Cutioner's Song' starts out in September so the Cable Limited Series is kind of a transition between the two." The series will be written by Fabian Nicieza and illustrated by John Romita, Jr.

DOUBLE EXPOSURE

"X-Cutioner's Song" begins with a bang, literally. At an international conference at which Professor Charles Xavier is speaking, Stryfe, without his helmet, shoots Professor X with the Techno Virus. Cable arrives with the rest of X-Force, only to find himself accused of the attack on Xavier.

Stryfe hopes to get Cable out of the way so that he can kidnap Scott and Jean Summers. His plan draws upon the tension against Cable built up over the past few months within the US Government. His scheme works as, during the confusion caused by Cable's arrival (viewed by those in attendance as the would-be assassin returning to the scene of his crime), Stryfe does indeed abduct Cyclops and Marvel Girl.

"TWO HOUSEHOLDS, BOTH ALIKE IN DIGNITY. . ."

Thus, X-Factor, in their role as a peace-keeping force of the US Government ("Sort of spokesmutants for the Feds whenever a mutant problem arises," as Bob explained) are sent in to capture X-Force.

"In many respects, X-Factor is the most conflicted of the X-Teams,"

When you start mixing and matching characters in an extensive storyline like this one, the characters begin to blur.

remarked Peter David. "They must adhere to government interests, but they aren't too happy about bringing in their own kind. This is the battle everyone's been waiting for," continued Peter. "X-Factor represents law and order, while X-Force is representative of anarchy."

In one aspect, the tension is particularly high. Rahne Sinclair, Wolfsbane, cares deeply for Sam Guthrie, Cannonball. Now, Rahne and Sam must battle each other. Rhane fans should also pay close attention to the match-up between Wolfsbane and Peral. Although having similar powers, these two characters are by no means equal.

During the ensuing conflict, the Blue Team of the X-Men is also sent in to capture Cable, thus compounding the confusion taking place as The X-Men team battles X-Force battles X-Factor. Cable escapes to track down Stryfe. Wolverine pursues, following Cable's familiar scent, and Bishop accompanies Wolverine, "although," as Bob remarked, "Bishop's relationship with the other X-Men continues to be shaky leading into 'X-Cutioner's Song.' But Bishop is still an X-Man."

Wolverine and Bishop do confront Cable within, of all places, the pages of X-Factor. "Yeah, isn't that funny," chuckled Peter David. "This major battle takes place in X-Factor, and nobody from X-Factor is involved. When you start mixing and matching characters in an extensive storyline like this one," continued Peter, "the characters begin to blur."

APOCALYPSE NOW

Stryfe takes Jean and Scott to the moon, where Stryfe intends to get revenge on Apocalypse. His reasons for seeking vengeance on Apocalypse, Cable, Cyclops and Marvel Girl is still a mystery. Stryfe attacks Apocalypse and defeats him.

"In 'X-Cutioner's Song,' it will be revealed that Stryfe is much more powerful than anyone realized," explained Bob. "Also, when the X-Men last confronted Apocalypse, he was in a nascent state. Apocalypse needs time to regenerate after each fight. He goes through an evolutionary step," Bob went on, "sort of like a chrysalis thing. Stryfe awakens him in the midst of this transformation and attacks him."

All will be disclosed during the cataclysmic battle within the time vortex on the moon.

The combined X-Teams arrive with Cable, Wolverine and Bishop, having figured out that they have all been duped. The teams uneasily agree to make a pact with Apocalypse, which Apocalypse quickly breaks when their attention is drawn towards Stryfe. This betrayal sets up the long awaited revenge match between Archangel and Apocalypse. Bob wouldn't reveal the specifics of this showdown, but Managing Editor Suzanne Gaffney remarked, "It's way cool!"

The X-Men discover that Stryfe is keeping Scott and Jean in a time vortex, a field that only Cable and Havok can penetrate. "Only a few people can enter the field," Bob revealed. "What's the link amongst Stryfe, Scott, Jean, Havok, and Cable?" All will be disclosed during the cataclysmic battle within the time vortex on the moon.

THE OLD OLDER CHANGETH

"X-Cutioner's Song" will also herald the establishment of the new creative teams on the X-Books. Taking the reins of X-men will be author Fabian Nicieza, who will continue to write THE NEW WARRIORS and NOMAD, and penciler Andy Kubert, also the artist for GHOST RIDER.

Scott Lobdell, "who wowed them on Excalibur," exclaimed Bob, will be the new writer on The Uncanny X-Men. Joe Quesada, the premiere artist on this year's X-Factor Annual, will become UNCANNY X-MEN's new artist. "Joe got a very good response from the fans on his work for that book."

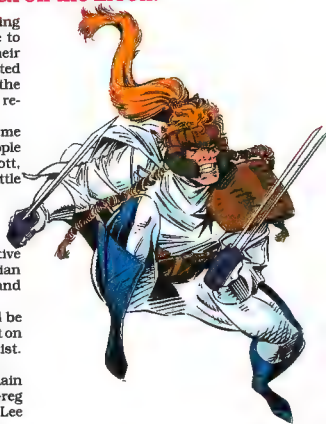
The extremely popular team of Peter David and Larry Stroman will remain on X-Factor and the team on X-Force will become Fabian Nicieza and Greg Capullo (of Quasar fame). "Yes, Fabian is vying for that coveted Stan Lee

We predict a nervous breakdown by sometime in December.

'writing fourteen titles a month' award," Bob said with a laugh. "We predict a nervous breakdown by sometime in December."

WITH GREAT POWER COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY

"The duties of an editor coordinating a project like 'X-cutioner's Song' don't change. They're just expanded," explained Bob Harras. "We're always working each month to keep the continuity tight; to have the actions of





each story react off the others. A crossover is just 'that,' only to a greater degree. The coordination is a pain in the butt, though."

Although "X-cutoner's Song" is a natural extension of tensions that have been building up in the X-Titles for some time, Bob expressed mixed feelings on the current inundation of multi-title crossovers that seems to have become the trend in the comic industry "If they are done really badly, yeah, they stink," replied Bob. "You hope that when doing these types of storylines that there is a payoff. You're asking the fans to get really pumped up for something so you better deliver. You do not want a dud."

"X-tinction Agenda' was incredibly successful," continued Bob. "People really liked it. . . 'Galactic Storm' too."

LIFE BEGINS AT THIRTY

The year 1993 marks the 30th anniversary of The Uncanny X-Men and to celebrate Marvel has several exciting projects planned. The most exciting of these is the debut of Cable's very own monthly title, written by the prolific Fabian Nicieza and drawn by Art Thibert.

"It will be similar to Wolverine's book in that Cable's series will continue to relate to the X-Men line," explained Bob. "The fans will get to see Cable as a lone super hero. Since Cable is a time traveler, there may be some of that."

Many of the X-Titles' most popular characters will also be receiving their day in the spotlight. Expect to see limited series highlighting Sabretooth (courtesy of writer Larry Hama and artist Mark Texeira), Gambit (Howard Mackie and Lee Weeks), and Deadpool (Fabian Nicieza and newcomer Joe Madureira). There are also mini-series in the works featuring Magneto and Bishop, but those are still in the planning stages.

Next year will mark the debut of a brand new X-Men quarterly, titled X-Men Spectacular. Each quarterly issue will feature 64 pages emphasizing the many interesting supporting cast members that the X-Men have collected over the years, such as The Acolytes, Mutant Liberation Front, and The Upstarts. The stories will demonstrate how these particular characters or groups integrate into the Marvel Universe.

For fans who want to know what's on the "Reading Requirements" list for Professor Charles Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters, Marvel will release The Official Guide-book to Xavier's Mansion. This tome is given to all members of Xavier's School when they become an X-Men. The text, written

The book rated an impressive "way cool" on the Gaffney Grade Scale.

and illustrated by various contributors, will be overseen by Suzafine Gaffney, assistant to Bob Harras in the X-Offices! In these many years (as well as a personal friend to Charles Xavier), and will contain such important info as "How to operate the Danger Room," "Where the dining areas are located," maps to the Blackbird and Morlock Tunnels, and the "Not Allowed Areas" of the mansion. The book rated an impressive "way cool" on the Gaffney Grade Scale.

SWEET CHILD O'MINE

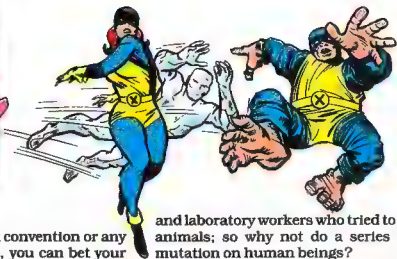
1993 also marks the 30th anniversary of another of Marvel's premiere team books, The Avengers. So a major storyline involving a crossover between these two powerhouses is already being set up within the pages of the 350th issue of The Avengers, where Charles Xavier will warn Earth's Mightiest Heroes about The Acolytes, the group of insanely overzealous mutants who worship Magneto.

Since Magneto's death within the pages of The X-Men, The Acolytes have been floundering to find an heir to the mantle of their idol. The baby Luna, daughter of the Inhuman Avenger Crystal and Magneto's son Quicksilver, currently of X-Factor, is also the granddaughter of Magneto. The Acolytes want her for their own, but they don't yet realize that Luna is human! Thus, the stage is set for the crossover.

Bob Harras described his tenure thus far on the X-Titles as, "Five years of fun." Part of Bob's enjoyment may come from his feeling that, "Although, there are individual titles, the X-Men are always a family. They have problems and fight, albeit on a grander scale than The Cleavers, but there's always that sense of love and unity. I've become a part of that family and I think the fans have too."

—Steve Vratos

Stan's SOAP BOX



Hi, Heroes!

Any time there's a new comic book convention or any sort of gathering of super hero fans, you can bet your "hug-a-mutic" membership card someone's gonna bring up the subject of The X-Men! And why not? They're the most popular group of super hero characters on the face of the Earth!

The request most often tossed at me is, "Tell us how the whole X-Men thing started. How did you dream them up, and why?"

The second part of that question is the easiest to answer. The reason the X-Men team was created is that our other super hero mags like FANTASTIC FOUR, THE INCREDIBLE HULK, SPIDER-MAN, etc., were doing such dynamite business that our sales gurus figured we ought to keep going while we were hot, so they asked me to come up with some other super hero idea — but it had to be refreshingly new, completely different and totally unique! Glad they didn't ask for something hard!

Having received the assignment, how was I going to dream up some super heroes who were new, different and unique? It seemed as if every origin and power had already been taken! The Fantastic Four got their super powers from being bombarded by cosmic rays; the Hulk became a Green-Skinned Goliath after a gamma-ray zapping; everybody's favorite teenager became your friendly neighborhood web-slinger when bitten by a radioactive spider; Dr. Don Blake simply found the God of Thunder's enchanted mallet for himself; and the world would probably still be Daredevil-less if Matt Murdock hadn't been blinded by radioactive material! So what was left?



Well, after long hours and days of relentless head scratching, one thought kept popping into my nearly numb little mind. It was a simple thought: we were living in an atomic age. Due to the birth of nuclear power and the ever present danger of radioactive fallout, our lives would never again be the same!

With that concept as a basis, it was easy to start imagining a world in which radiation would affect generations to come. In the beginning, the effect would be minute, almost imperceptible. As time went by, we'd start to see increasing examples of the effects of toxic chemicals, environmental pollution and the radioactivity which would constantly spread unless and until mankind learned how to come to grips with the forces of nature and began to clean up its act by protecting and caring for the planet which houses us all.

Now I guess you can see what I'm leading up to. The one thing that radioactivity is known to produce in living matter, whether it be fruits, vegetables, livestock — or human beings — is mutation! There have been many science fiction stories about demented physicists

and laboratory workers who tried to create mutations in animals; so why not do a series about the effect of mutation on human beings?

From there on, it was a breeze. I decided to populate our forthcoming series with two kinds of mutants: good ones and evil ones. I knew it would be fun dreaming up different super powers for each of the groups, and the best part about it was the fact that no matter how weird or far out the super powers were, we could justify them on the grounds of simple evolutionary mutation!

Perhaps one of the funniest anecdotes about the X-Men's creation has to do with the name itself. I originally wanted to call the mag THE MUTANTS. I thought it would be the perfect title. But in those days, although I was editor-in-chief, I had to get my publisher's okay. Trouble was, he hated the name. He thought nobody would understand the word mutant. He said our readers wouldn't know what mutants were. I told him I didn't agree, but even if he was right it wouldn't matter because once they read the magazine it would be abundantly clear to them what mutation was all about. But he was unshakable in his conviction, so I had to find another name.

It wasn't easy. I couldn't find any good synonyms for "mutant" and even if I had, he'd probably have vetoed them, too. After a while I decided that every mutant had an extra ability of some sort — and the word "extra" stayed with me. Then it hit me. I'd call their leader Professor Xavier, or Professor X, for short. His students could then be called the X-Men, which I felt had a nice, dramatic ring to it. Also, the "X" in X-Men could stand for the "X-tra" power each mutant possessed! It seemed perfect on every level.

Luck was with me. From the vantage point of his supreme publisherhood, my boss agreed with me, and the X-Men were born. But here's the funny part which I mentioned earlier, and which had obviously never occurred to him. If no one would know what a mutant was, how in the name of Cyclop's ginchy goggles would anyone know what an X-Man was?!? Needless to say, I never brought that little point up to him!

It's been a long journey between those fateful days in the early sixties when the X-Men included Professor X, Cyclops, Marvel Girl, Iceman, the Beast and the Angel — and the Evil Mutants included Magneto, Toad plus one other whom I can't quite remember — and since my estimable editor, Sagacious Steve Saffel, is in a rush for this article, I haven't time to look it up! So an environmentally safe, radiation-proof, mutant-free No-Enviro to the first fifty X-perts who can tell us who that third evil mutant was back in those dizzy days when mutancy was abomin'!"

And while you're rushing to your reference library, I know you'll be glad I reminded you: "Chacun a son gout!" It's the type of thing that only an evil mutant would ever forget!

Excelsior!



— Stan Lee

Creating THE an ONYX International OVERLORD Epic

THE ONYX OVERLORD, an upcoming four-part Epic mini-series, is the exciting new addition to what has become known as the "Moebius Universe." Like AKIRA, it is one of the growing number of comic books whose production work is shared between Marvel and a foreign publisher: in this case, Moebius's French publisher, Les Humanoides Associes (The Associated Humanoids).

The result of this co-production effort is that nearly identical versions of the same series will appear simultaneously not only in English and French, but also in Italian, German, Dutch, and Portuguese! The Epic Comics editions will be in the 32 page, \$2.50 offset format.

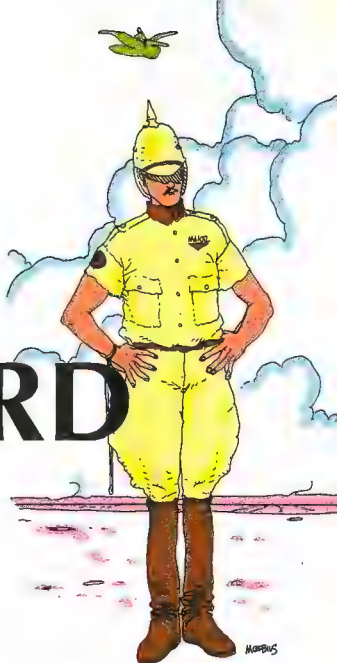
A look behind the scenes of this complex transatlantic venture begins in the California-based offices of Starwatcher Graphics, Moebius's own company, which acts as the mastermind and coordinator all of Moebius's worldwide endeavors.

"THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE is arguably Moebius's best-known graphic novel," noted Jean-Marc Lofficier, vice-president of Starwatcher and (with his wife and writing partner, Randy) co-scripter on THE ONYX OVERLORD. Among the Lofficiers' recent Marvel credits are back-up features for DR. STRANGE, the recent "Time-Quake" series of WHAT IF... and an upcoming CLIVE BARKER'S HELLRAISER story.

THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE is Moebius' original attempt at creating a super hero not unlike Marvel's High Evolutionary.

"It was always Moebius's intention to further explore the fascinating universe of the Garage," he added. "We thought it would be fun to have him come up with new stories, and then find American artists to draw them. Also, it gives new readers an affordable way to discover the characters and become used to his particular brand of science fiction."

THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE, originally published in France by the Humanoids in 1977, has since garnered numerous awards throughout the world. The Epic Graphic Novel, released in 1987, was at the time of its publication, one of Marvel's best-selling books.



THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE is Moebius's original attempt at creating a super hero not unlike Marvel's High Evolutionary. The central character, Major Grubert, once stole the secrets of creation from his former master, a mysterious, god-like entity. The Major used these secrets to create his own, private universe inside a small barren asteroid — the Airtight Garage.

Like DOCTOR WHO's tardis, the inside of the Airtight Garage asteroid is bigger than its outside. It is, in fact, comprised of three pocket universes, commonly known as "Levels."

The First Level is the Major's private domain, a Garden of Eden-like kingdom which houses the Major's Castle and the fantastic machines — the expansion generators — which sustain the Garage.

The Second Level is a technological wonderland, somewhat similar to our own world. It is the seat of a powerful empire, ruled from the city-state of Armjournth, Pearl of the Tundra. Except for Armjournth's President and his secret Fractal Police, the Second Level's inhabitants are unaware that their world is, in reality, an artificial creation.

The Third Level is a savage world, a land of wizards and warriors, of giants and monsters, not unlike CONAN's Hyborian age. There, technology becomes magic, and the Major and his cohorts are legendary figures known as the Elsewhere Gods.

The Major himself sits, god-like, in his spaceship The Ciguri, which orbits the Airtight Garage asteroid in the "real" universe. Being a world-shaper of considerable powers, he has made many enemies who covet his secrets, or want to invade or destroy his creation.

"The universe of THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE owes as much to the science-fiction works of award-winning authors such as Philip Jose Farmer, Roger Zelazny and

Michael Moorcock, whose works are favorites of Moebius," explained co-writer Randy Lofficier, "as to a long standing comic book tradition of fabulous planets such as Flash Gordon's Mongo and the High Evolutionary's Counter-Earth."

In THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE, the Major and his private world were discovered by his ancient enemies, the Bakalttes, and his one time ally, Lewis Carnelian. The Major was also forced to fight a megalomaniacal Arm-jourth scientist who wanted to take his place. At the end of the story, the Major, stripped of his powers, was forced to flee the Garage via a junction to one of the parallel worlds known as "Randomearth."

"When Moebius decided to tell new stories in the AIR-TIGHT GARAGE universe, we agreed that they should not be sequels," remarked Randy Lofficier. "Rather, we

Like DOCTOR WHO's tardis, the inside of the Airtight Garage asteroid is bigger than its outside.

felt it was more interesting to concentrate on stories which took place BEFORE the graphic novel began—in other words, during the millennia between the creation of the Airtight Garage, and the Fall of the Major."

The first such story was THE ELSEWHERE PRINCE, a six-issue mini-series released by Epic in 1990. Illustrated by Eric Shanower, it took place on the savage Third Level, and told how the Major and his ally, the Archer, defeated a monster created by the wizardry of the Tar-Hai, a race of evil magicians who once threatened to take over the Garage.

The curtain now rises on a second story, entitled THE ONYX OVERLORD, a four-part series illustrated by Jerry Bingham, talented artist of *Beowulf* and *Batman: Son of the Demon*.

"I enjoyed being associated with the project, having been a fan of Moebius for many years," said Bingham. "I always enjoy a chance to work in science fiction, because it allows me a great deal of creativity in designing new characters and new worlds."

THE ONYX OVERLORD opens when the Second Level is under attack from an alien villain who dreams of enslaving the Airtight Garage. The Major is nowhere in sight. The herpes are Finnegar, a tough, female private eye from Armjourn, and Daxtre, a prim and proper officer from the Ciguri (who was a minor, supporting character in the original graphic novel). They are forced to embark on an adventure to thwart the villain's designs.

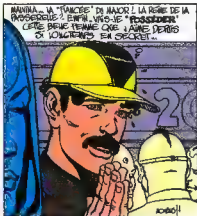
Their quest will take them to a Randomearth where the Mexican Empire is at war with the Confederacy, and where they meet an alternate version of Moebius's legendary western hero, Lt. Blueberry. Ultimately it will lead them to the villain's mysterious homeworld, Onyx. . .

"Working on stories which contain historical, or as is the case with THE ONYX OVERLORD, pseudo-historical material, is a challenge which I enjoy," noted Bingham. "Because of the amount of research it required, I found working on the second issue (where the Confederates battle the Mexicans) more difficult, but the end product was also more rewarding."

Each issue of THE ONYX OVERLORD will also contain a series of back-up features about Major Grubert and the world of the Airtight Garage, illustrated by Moebius, including his pencil breakdowns for the first issue of THE ELSEWHERE PRINCE, published here for the first time.



"Moebius did the first draft of the plot, which we had to restructure somewhat to fit within the four allocated issues," explained Jean-Marc Lofficier. "For example, there were more adventures on the Mexican/Confederate Earth. We stuck to the structure, but trimmed some of the details. On the other hand, the conclusion of the



Cervic and Daxtre as depicted by Jerry Bingham (in THE ONYX OVERLORD) and by Moebius (in THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE).

story was a bit too short, so we added a few twists. The idea of using the Starbilliard, the Major's giant android, to battle the villains' Overlord was ours. Also, in Moebius's original draft, it wasn't Daltxrey but another officer from the Ciguri who was the hero. We thought our fans would prefer to see a familiar character return."

The heroes are Finnegar, a tough, female private eye from Armjournth, and Daltxrey, a prim and proper officer from the Ciguri.

Once Moebius's plot had been translated, adapted and edited to accommodate the four-issue structure, it was handed by the Lofficers to Jerry Bingham, who made a major contribution — changing the sex of the other hero (Finnegar) from that of a male detective to a female one.

"I made Finnegar female because I wanted to break the cliché of the gumshoe detective after the likes of Sam Spade, Philip Marlowe, etc. Making her a woman who was just as tough as all the other male P.I.s was interesting. I was happy that Moebius and the Lofficers were open to my making that change, which redirected the story in a major way. Because Finnegar had to come across as tough and energetic, I gave her a strong build for a woman. I even drew a scar on her face to show that she's been through a lot."

Unlike most comics stories, Bingham's original pages were penciled and inked *without* word balloons, to take into account the multinational nature of the project. The art was sent to editor Eric Mettout at the Humanoides in Paris, where "blue lines" were produced. "Blue lines" are identical reproductions of the art, printed in blue (a color invisible to separation scanners), which are given to the colorist to paint. This technique, commonly employed in Europe, makes it possible to obtain a richer palette of colors. THE ONYX OVERLORD was thus fully-painted by a team of French colorists headed by Marc Elfassy.



what we wrote." The balloon placements were carefully considered with Jerry Bingham, in order to maximize the artistic impact.

The result of all these efforts will be a series of editions all containing the same story, yet which have been crafted according to each country's specific requirements. For instance, the Humanoids will publish THE ONYX OVERLORD as two hardcovers, combining two comic books in one, but without the back-up features.



The inked art for THE ONYX OVERLORD. . . . the painted "blue-line" colors. . . . and the colors with black-line overlay.

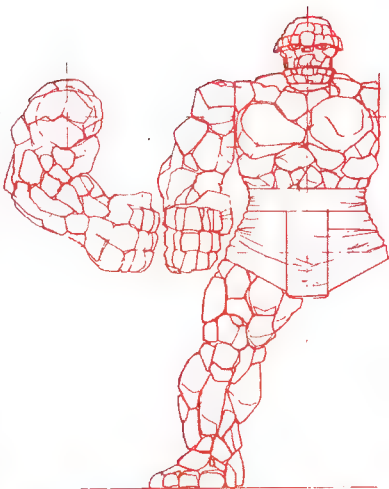
While the production work is taking place, so is the writing, in English, by Randy and Jean-Marc Lofficier. Word balloons and captions containing the script are added, on overlay, before engraving. At Marvel, it is the task of ONYX OVERLORD editor Chris Cooper, who has received a copy of the French "blue lines," to replace the French balloons with English ones.

"We've tried to capture the mixture of hard-boiled detective and science fiction which Moebius and Dan O'Bannon had created in their classic story THE LONG TOMORROW (in MOEBIUS 4)," said the Lofficers. "English is much better than French for this. What the French readers will receive is, in fact, a translation of

The Brazilian edition will be virtually identical to Marvel's. The Germans prefer a softcover, with some, but not all of the back-up features. What lies in store for THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE? Moebius has already plotted the next story, entitled THE CYDBERG ASSASSIN, currently being drawn by Scottish artist Cam Kennedy (THE LIGHT AND DARKNESS WAR, THE PUNISHER: BLOOD ON THE MOORS). In it, the Major and his fiancée, Malvina, face their deadliest enemy yet. In the meantime, plans are afoot to reprint the original Moebius AIRTIGHT GARAGE, as a 4-issue limited series, with new covers and pages by Moebius.

— Jean-Marc Lofficier

CLASSIC ACTION!



For thirty years the heroes of the Marvel Universe have majestically strode across the landscape of time, each carving out his or her own legend. For three decades heroes and villains have been locked in struggle of good vs. evil, in battles both great and small.

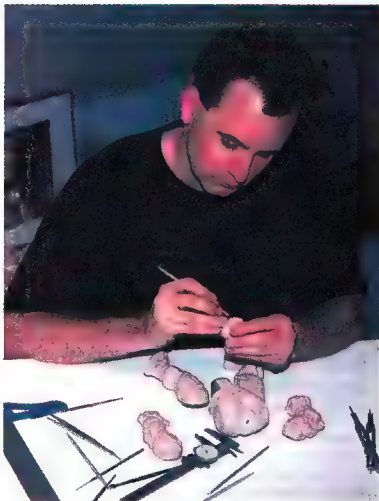
For the past couple of years those epic battles have been magically transported from the comics pages to the homes of fans everywhere. Under the auspices of the New York-based toy company, Toy Biz, many of the most popular Marvel characters have "come to life" in the form of five-inch tall articulated action figures.

This year Toy Biz will issue a new group of heroes and villains to augment the ever-growing line of these popular toys. This year's assortment will arrive in two waves, issuing a powerful one-two punch to Marveldom assembled. The first group — tentatively set to arrive in August — features Mr. Fantastic, the Thing, Spider-Man, Annihilus and Venom, with the second group consisting of Invisible Woman, the Human Torch, a second Spider-Man, the Silver Surfer and Deathlok hitting the shelves soon thereafter.

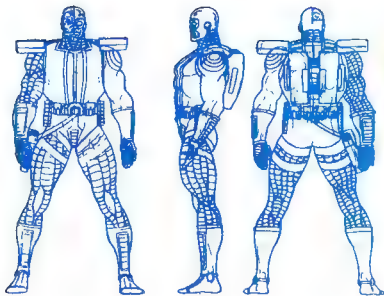
Toy-line Editor Tom Brevoort revealed the most up-to-date details on how comics' favorite heroes get translated into toys and insights on how the heck someone can actually edit a toy line. He noted that creating a line of toys isn't as easy as it may sound. Apparently, there's a great deal of discussion that goes on between Marvel and Toy Biz, as both sides develop their own lists of characters they feel will make dynamic and interesting toys, then agree to the makeup of the line. Once characters are chosen, everyone must then determine how best to display each one's powers.

...Once characters are chosen, everyone must then determine how best to execute each character's powers.

While some character choices are fairly simple to select ("Every year you're going to get Spider-Man because Spider-Man's such a popular character."). Some are not so clear-cut. For instance, this year Sue Storm will make her first appearance as an action figure since her 1974 Mego doll. This is because, traditionally, female



Sculptor Steve Kiwus adds detail to the wax sculpture of The Thing. This sculpture will be used to make a silicone rubber mold (see additional photo) that will in turn be used to make multiple copies of the prototype. Photo by Liza Leigh.



figures don't sell as well as male figures. However, the powers that be at Marvel felt that they owed it to FF fans to issue all four members.

Of course, there are always those up-and-coming stars who break away from the pack and demand attention. One such character is Deathlok "Toy Biz wanted to do Deathlok and I was certainly into that, because it's a book I edit," Tom told us. Other characters simply suggest themselves, "If you have heroes, you have to have villains, thus we developed Venom for Spider-Man." Tom went on to say, "You want to develop characters that are going to look visually cool on the shelf."

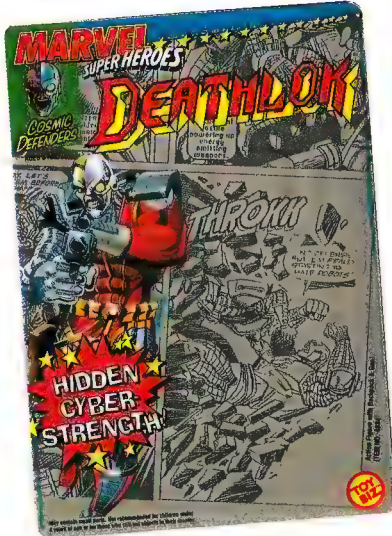
According to Tom, many of the negotiations on Marvel's behalf were coordinated by three persons; himself (representing the editorial department), Alan Gordon, senior vice-president of licensing, and Gloria Birulin, Alan's production coordinator. Toy Biz's end was handled by Ann Pitrone, vice-president of development.

The four of them, with others from both companies, went through the characters each company wanted to develop, along with what actions and accessory each character required (Reed has an FF flare gun; Spidey, a tracer; the

If you have heroes, you have to have villains, thus we developed Venom for Spider-Man."

Surfer, his surfboard etc.) All of these figures will be constructed in such a way so as to best display their powers. Special consideration is given to each character so that not only does his power reflect his abilities in the comics, but that their accessory is something they would actually carry (Spidey wouldn't carry a handgun or the Punisher wear a cape, for instance).

Naturally, while every person in the room had their own personal favorites, licensing skewed towards those characters that are likely to best be recognized by the non-comics reading public. "In terms of the 'real' world," Tom stated, "As opposed to comic book fans, there's about half a



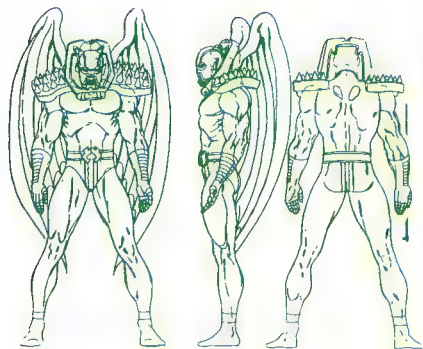
Once the initial sculpture is done, Steve Kiwus makes a silicone rubber mold that will allow him to produce multiple copies of the prototype statue. These will be sent to the various people involved in the approval and manufacturing processes. Photo by Liza Leigh.



Steve Kiwus of Minneapolis in front of a gallery of his creations. To insure the best possible detail, the prototype sculptures for the Toy Biz figures are always prepared at twice the size of final toys. Steve has been a sculptor for the Toy Biz line since 1990. Photo by Liza Leigh.



The Toy Biz catalog photo of the new Spider-Man, Deathlok, Venom and Silver Surfer figures.



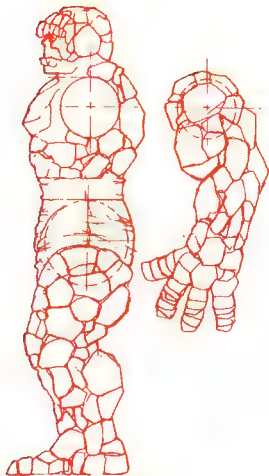
dozen characters that maybe 'real' people are familiar with, and a bunch of others that they're not." And everyone pays attention to those characters with nifty features that will create instant interest.

Once the cast of characters has been narrowed down to an agreed-upon list (this year that list includes nearly 30 characters, comprising both the X-Men and "Classic" Marvel lines. For more info on the X-Men characters, check out *MARVEL AGE* #113), Tom then gets a Marvel artist (in this case Rodney Ramos, with others helping), to develop model sheets showing the characters from all angles (similar to the *MARVEL UNIVERSE* entries). These drawings are turned over to Toy Biz, then designers at Toy Biz come back with three-views (front, side and rear) that show where all joints and mechanisms will be located, and how they work.

This schematic art goes through an approval stage, where everything is fine-tuned ("That doesn't look like Reed Richards, you have to tilt his eyebrows more, and pull his hair back a bit. . .") When everyone is satisfied, the three-view is sculpted in clay, which results in another round of corrections and approvals.

Then the toy goes into the Paint Master phase, where figures are sculpted twice their normal size, a cast is made, and the resulting figure is painted. Each figure is then examined to make sure everything is in the right place and painted the correct colors. From here, the figures go into production, eventually winding up at your local toy stores.

In some cases, the choice of power to display (and method of displaying it) was fairly simple. With Venom, not only does his tongue extend from his mouth (via a lever on his back), but he has a special venom "skin" which attaches to the chest of his victims. Annihilus has a pair of wings that flap, and the rock-bound Thing comes with a Yancy St. street light for him to mangle. In some cases, the character's powers proved to be a bit tricky to depict, as with Mr. Fantastic's stretching, but the folks at Toy Biz rose to the occasion.



Tom told us that Reed's stretching power is similar to, but much better than, last year's Apocalypse. "With Apocalypse they [Toy Biz] were limited with what they could do given the technology at the time. He went on to say that Mr. Fantastic has extensions in his chest, legs, arms, and neck, which cause Reed to telescope to one-and-a-half times his normal height.

Still, this was not the most difficult power to manifest. That distinction goes to the Invisible Woman, who turns white when exposed to cold. This is the closest approximation to invisibility that could be managed given the technology and both companies' desire to keep down the cost and price to the consumer. A similar problem occurred with the Human Torch, who will ultimately come with some of his flames sculpted to his body.

"I just saw the mockup the other day, and it is positively frightening."

And there's Spider-Man, who, with four action figures, leads the pack (tied with Wolverine. Punisher is a close third with three). We asked Tom what else could they do to Spidey to make the two 1992 figures different from the ones already developed. "The first one is called Spidey-tracer, because it comes with a pretty sizable Spidey-tracer that he will launch out of his arm. The second Spider-Man is what we call the 'fully poseable' Spider-Man," Tom said. "I just saw the mockup the other day, and it is positively frightening."

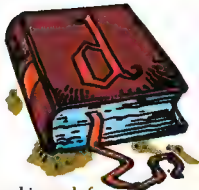
The poseable Spidey is ball-jointed, much like an artist's wooden drawing figure, only with more joints. "You can put Spidey in any conceivable pose," Tom said, "Including those Todd McFarlane poses that you didn't imagine that anyone could get into." This Spidey has a nylon wire frame that holds it all together, with ball joints at the feet, knees, pelvis, elbows, shoulders, wrists, neck, two in the chest, and one at the waist. "If it's in the comic, you can get him in it. It's really incredible."

According to spokespeople at both Toy Biz and Marvel, their relationship has been mutually beneficial to both parties, especially when you consider that most action figures are spun off TV programs or movies. The Marvel characters have climbed to the top of the action-figure heap solely on the strength of the characters and comics themselves, which, according to both Al Gordon and Ann Pitrone, is a difficult thing to do. "This is a fairly significant number of characters to come out in the third year of a toy line," Al stated. "It's a healthy commitment on the part of Toy Biz, and one that we're happy with." Still, given the popularity both the comics and the toy line, we can expect to see yet even more characters in the time to come. We can only hope.

— Robert J. Sadron

(EDITOR'S NOTE: In MARVEL AGE #113 — "New 1992 X-Men Figures" — we listed Bishop and Havok as 1992 action figures. Anne Pitrone of Toy Biz and Eagle-eyed Editor Tom Brevoort informed us that these two characters didn't make it into this year's line, but are under consideration for 1993. Also, the toy actions for Classic Wolverine, Weapon X, Iceman, Sabretooth, Mr. Sinister, Magneto, Warpath, Shatterstar, Four-Arm, Deadpool, Kane, GW Bridge and Stryfe were either incorrect or changed since the article was written. Check for the correct actions, clearly indicated on the toy packages. Thanks for setting us straight, Anne & Tom!)

Paging through the Book of Sins: The Darkhold Revealed The Darker Side of a Universe

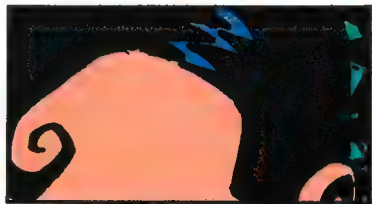


Chthon was a foresighted and wizened god, ahead of his time. Sensing the encroaching end of the Time Before Time which belonged to the Elder Gods alone, he alone took steps to avoid it. He devised a method through which he could escape the hunger of the age of science and man which was to come, by creating a document of his majesty, a record of his very existence.

— Myths and Legends of the Elder Gods., 1322.

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Sometimes it can be downright deadly. But the thirst for knowledge is what drives occult researchers who have compiled all that we now know of the arcane history of our world, a Universe of Marvels. It's the tenant behind the careers of publicly acclaimed experts in the supernatural such as Dr. Anthony Druid and Dr. Stephen Strange. It's also what drives lesser known theologians as Christian Cooper.

Cooper is one of the foremost authorities on the ancient and near mythic cult of the Darkholders, and the ancient Book of Sins they allegedly worshipped. Cooper portrays this manuscript in his latest research work, **THE DARKHOLD, PAGES FROM THE BOOK OF SINS**, a manuscript on the works of the Elder God Chthon, and its continuing power in the world around us.



The legend contends that Chthon inscribed the fruits of his arcane scholarship into the unaging parchment surface, creating the document that would become known as the Darkhold. In its pages were buried the secrets which could bring a new age of the Elder Gods to Earth, wreaking havoc with the current order.

— The Devil's Library, The Ten Most Feared Books of the Occult.1749

The recent interest in the mystery-shrouded tome has brought Cooper to the forefront of his field, prompted by the startling revelations in his book. The text is illustrated by veteran occult illustrator Richard Case (past artist for Morrison's eclectic **DOOM PATROL** treatises), who brings the propositions within the pages to vivid, unnatural life. The most interesting and unsettling concept proposed in the treatise is the ominous possibility that lost pages of the Darkhold may truly exist, and more, that some unseen malignant hand may be guiding them purposefully into the hands of the unsuspecting.



The book remained an object of awe and fear, in hiding until Medieval times, when a monk came up with the scathingly brilliant idea of scattering the pages of the book, to end their evil influence. We believe that most have been recollected. Most. We pray the rest have been destroyed. We live in fear that they may lie in waiting.

— The Journal of Fr. Antonio Rossini, circa 1632

"This is very different from the materials readers may be used to," Cooper promises. "There are recurring characters and lead characters, but it's as much about the horrors that come out of the Darkhold as it is about people."

"It's a horror book, and a book about horrible things happening. It's not about all these characters in fights we see so much of. It's about people like you and me, who have to face horrible things. They don't have web-shooters, they don't have mutant powers. They've only got their smarts and their courage to try and defeat what they're facing.

"They're going to be up against some pretty tough company, and some of them will get hurt, and maybe even some of them will die."

Amid the rising controversy surrounding the text of **The Darkhold, Pages From the Book of Sins** is a mystery, whose solution may be the salvation or doom of the human race. Is there any basis to the fear that missing pages of Darkhold may yet surface, to plague the innocent? Only time, and possibly Cooper's ongoing works, will tell.



"I've Got an Idea. . . ."

Welcome aboard — !

Unless you've been surfing with an alien for the last year or so, you'd know that the comic book industry is currently hotter than Ghost Rider's blazing new bike! Hordes upon anxious hordes of frantic new fans are flocking to their local comic shops to partake of our fabulous four-color fantasies! (Actually, there are a heck of a lot more than a mere four colors being utilized these days, but that's a tempting topic for a whole other column — !)

As you can well imagine, I am constantly being assailed by eager hopefuls who have a single, all-consuming desire . . . they want to write comics! (Who can blame them? We typewriter jockeys have it made! We get to sit around all day, cavorting within the most fascinating creative playground of them all. . . and we actually get paid for this unparalleled pleasure! Whoa-boy, what a country!)

"I've got plenty of ideas!" is a hauntingly familiar refrain! I hear it stated sincerely and constantly from most of these creative candidates. (I'm often tempted to respond, "So you're the gal — !" But, that would be crude. . . especially if it's a guy who's talking!)

Ideas are great! They're the starting point. A story is a work of fiction which uses a certain form to convey certain ideas to a reader. Without these ideas, you have nothing to say...and, therefore, nothing to write.

Unfortunately . . . ideas do not a story make!

Many years ago, when I still had time to take the occasional day off, I'd kill a few hours on the golf course or at the bowling alley. My head would brim with all of these great ideas about how I'd drive the ball straight down the fairway or roll the perfect strike.

...ideas do not a story make!

However, I would still spend the majority of my time searching the weeds for my lost balls or growling at the gutter. For all my great ideas, the sad fact is that I didn't have the skill that was necessary to carry them off.

Writing is a craft. It is neither a natural instinct, nor a boon from Odin, the All-Father! While you may be born with the prerequisite talent and imagination, you won't necessarily possess the ability to properly convert your ideas into words and stories.

We have often heard the expression, "He's a born surgeon!" How many of us would allow him to operate on our loved ones if we learned that the man in question had never gone to medical school?!

And yet, many people gleefully tamper with the lives of our most cherished characters without any of the necessary training. They have ideas! Doesn't that en-



title them to something?

No, it doesn't.

Everyone has ideas.

Everyone!

Ask around if you don't believe me. (Quite a few of them may deal with the more mundane details of existence, like running the government and paying the monthly rent, but they are ideas, nonetheless!)

Luckily, you don't have to attend a particular school or obtain a special degree to be a writer. Most of us can train ourselves. But, the operative word is "train."

Writing is a craft. It is neither a natural instinct, nor a boon from 'odin, the all-father!'

There is a craft to writing. You owe it to yourself to learn it! Study it! Practice it! Love it!

For your first lesson, you must learn to challenge your ideas. . . and yourself!

"I have an idea. . . the Thing should fight the Hulk!"

While this particular idea may be an old one, we should use our craft to question it properly! Put it on the witness stand, and grill it mercilessly! If it's a good idea, it will spark others.

Why should they fight?

Where — ?

How — ?

What are the repercussions?

A few intriguing answers could lead to an entertaining story — !

Why — ? Well, maybe the Hulk has learned that a certain scientist has discovered a cure for cancer. However, maybe the Thing has learned that the key ingredient can only be achieved by murdering a few

innocent children. This would naturally lead to conflict between our muscular madmen.

But, maybe we shouldn't use cancer. If it were a rare blood disease, that would explain why the scientist needs the children. He wants to drain their blood!

But, maybe we should make the story a little more personal. Maybe the Hulk's wife is suffering from this disease, and the scientist kidnaps the Yancy Street Gang. (Nah, too convenient!)

Where — ? The scientist's base could be on the moon, which would mean that our boys would have to fight without benefit of air or gravity. Or, in the Savage Land which would bring dinosaurs into play. A tropical island, an arctic camp or downtown Manhattan could all provide interesting backgrounds.

How — ? Maybe they have to don giant robot suits, or underwater equipment, or, maybe, they're forced into a situation where they merely arm wrestle!

You must rip into each idea! Stretch it! Twist it! Probe it!

Come up with as many solutions as your imagination can conceive!

As a general rule, your first answer to any question will always be the most obvious one. Obvious to you. . . and all of your readers!

You must rip into each idea!

Sift through the vast possibilities! Decide which ones are tantalizing, trivial or just plain dumb. The main difference between an amateur and a professional is that the amateur loves all of his ideas, and the professional rejects most of his!

Use only the best!

Your readers deserve nothing less!

Thanks for being there!



pollard
&
sinnott

Tom DeFalco

MUTANT ANIMATION

THE X-MEN'S TELEVISION SERIES

MARVEL AGE: Okay, Bob. How about we start with the basics. How long will the animated show run and who's going to be working on the series?

BOB HARRAS: The show will run for the 1992/1993 broadcast season, and hopefully will be picked up again for 1993/1994. Saban Entertainment is the animation studio in charge of getting the show made and, through Graz Entertainment, is responsible for the scripts and storyboards. Pre and post production will be done in the U.S. and Canada, and the animation (the drawing of the cells) will be done in Japan and Korea at a studio named AKOM.

MA: And it airs September —

BH: The tentative date is September 12, 1992 which is the opening of the 1992/1993 Fox broadcast season.

MA: Now, you're acting as an editor on this project?

BH: Right. It's my job to review all plots, scripts, voices and character models, as well as insure that the show is consistent with the overall tone and direction of the X-MEN comics.

MA: And Joe Calamari, Marvel's Executive Vice President is —

BH: Joe is like "mission control" for Marvel. He makes sure that my comments, Stan Lee's comments, and FOX Broadcasting's comments are all given to Saban. He tries to work out any conflicts that arise as quickly as possible so that production isn't delayed. Joe is also involved with the business affairs people at FOX and SABAN so he knows what each of our respective obligations are, which keeps us from going off on tangents.

MA: Anyone else from Marvel, or elsewhere, involved in this project?

BH: Yes — Stan Lee is very involved on behalf of Marvel and Sidney Iwaner on behalf of FOX. I normally discuss my thoughts with Stan and Sidney, and then Stan picks up the project with the storyboards. Since Stan and Sidney are in California, they can meet with Will

Meuniot, the supervising producer, and SABAN easier than I.

MA: Putting it together. . . ?

BH: Okay, putting it together. First, Joe and Stan sold the idea to FOX to do a show. Then Marvel picked SABAN to produce the show for FOX. After that, a "bible" and 13 episode story overview were prepared which Tom DeFalco, Marvel's Editor in Chief, and I went over for approval of the 13 different story arcs. From these arcs, we get plots for each episode which we then talk over with Eric Lewald, the story editor out in L.A., and he incorporates our notes into his work. Scripts, storyboards, models, voices, etc. follow from these plots.

I'd say they've taken 99.9 percent from the books.

MA: Backing up a little bit in the order of how things came about for the series. . . you flew to California to pick the characters — which characters, Bob —

BH: I flew to California for a one day meeting with the representatives of SABAN and FOX. We wanted to get the most up-to-date characters, so I was pushing for characters like Gambit and Jubilee — characters like Bishop, who they hadn't heard of in LA.

On the whole, everyone in the series is someone who appeared in the books. Magneto's going to be in there. Sunfire. The Blob as well. I'd say they've taken 99.9% from the books.

MA: Cool.

BH: People like Wolverine and Cyclops were natural choices, Rogue was very popular, Professor X. . . Some characters that are important to the X-Men — they felt they would be put on a back burner, which was surprising. Jean Grey, the Beast, and Archangel — those characters won't appear in every episode. They just wanted to get as many X-Men out there on the show as possible,

All sketches included here are the rough storyboards used in plotting the X-Men animated series.

GRAZ Entertainment

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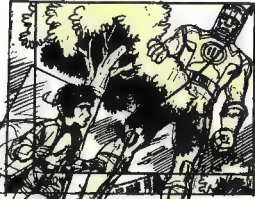


ON JUBILEE

DIAL

JUBILEE: "LARRY? "

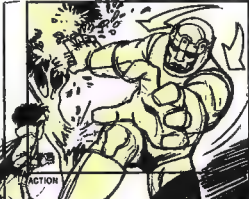
SC. CONT BG.



DIAL

SHE TURNS, — TRUCK-CUT TO INCLUDE SENTINEL.

SC. CONT BG.



DIAL

SENTINEL REACHES FOR HER.

and doing that meant some had to go to a 'b' team type situation.

MA: Who's the team leader, Bob?

BH: Who's the leader, Suzanne?

Um, it's Storm — no, I'm sorry — Cyclops is the leader. There's an episode dealing with Storm's coming of age as a leader.

MA: About the timeline for the project, like when it got started —

BH: The project started in December 1991 and I heard about it in January and flew out at the end of January.

MA: Did they show you examples of their style of animation?

BH: No, what I saw out in L.A. were possibilities — film clips of different ways of taking this project but I didn't see anything specifically related to the X-Men show. We saw computer graphics they were thinking of using, background techniques, etc.

Cable's actually going to appear in two episodes.

MA: Okay, then you're back at the office. How closely tied is the TV series to the comic series?

BH: Margaret Loesch is the head of the Fox Children's Network and she wants this to be very much like the comic book. She knows the comics are very successful and she wants to duplicate that as much as possible on TV. Of course, in translating there's going to be some differences, but their goal is to maintain a close connection with the books — that's why they're using someone like Bishop, because he's very big in the books — that's why they want to put Cable in. Cable's actually going to appear in two episodes.

MA: Would you say, for the series, that they have adapted different sagas, like the Dark Phoenix Saga — that they've taken "chunks" from X-Men continuity —

BH: What they've done for the first few episodes is taken a whole overview of the X-Men and tried to convey it to the viewers who have never heard of the X-Men. (phone rings) Scott, (Lobdell, who's in the office reading over some script notions Bob has made on the script for the next X-MEN issue) you want to get that?

SCOTT: Sure, Bob. (laughter)

BH: The introduction of Bishop is very similar to what we've done in our books. There is an introduction to the Morlocks and Callisto which is very, very similar to what was done in the (UNCANNY) X-MEN when they were intro-

duced way back when. Other sequences have been adapted. Like Muir Island — the way it appears on TV will be different from the island we see in the books, but only slightly so.

MA: Any crossovers? We've got Cable, so far. How about Spider-Man?

BH: No, no. Cable is the only character right now who doesn't appear in the X-MEN book, per se, who will be in the series.

MA: Okay. You've got some of the stories down now. Next came the approving of the character sketches, right?

BH: Right. GRAZ Entertainment sent in sketches for the show. These sketches are usually done on a simpler level than we do here for the comic books, and we make sure they followed the basic concept of our characters. There were things like Jean Grey's hair which, for some reason, they wanted to change for the series, so we got about 6 or 7 different hairstyles for Jean and I had to pick, and Stan had to pick, and other people had to pick what style was best.

MA: People have asked about the Wolverine costume.

BH: The Wolverine costume will be the new "old" costume — the costume he's currently being seen in, the blue and yellow one. They want to keep the TV show current with the books. That's why I went out to L.A. They didn't want the series to show up on TV and have the fans say, "This isn't how the book is — these characters don't appear in the book." They didn't want to put Kitty Pryde in because Kitty Pryde hasn't been in the X-Men for 5 years.

MA: Okay. What about the characters' voices?

BH: We received many audition tapes, and had to pick the voices which best fit the characters. We have had conference calls involving 6 or 8 people — the casting people in Canada, the L.A. people, everyone putting in their two cents on which voices they liked, and we've come up with a consensus on eight or ten of the voices, so far.

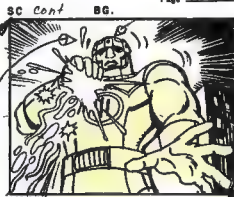
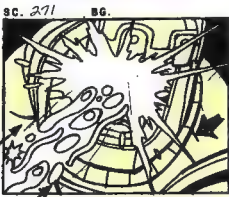
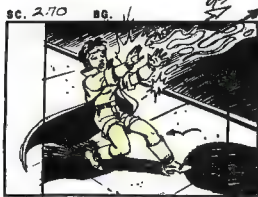
I'd say the hardest voices to pick were Wolverine's, Storm's, and Professor X's. The easiest were probably Gambit's, Cyclops's, Magneto's, and the Beast's.

MA: And how about the theme song? Same basic process?

BH: Theme song — okay — we've gotten several — I think 16 or so theme songs ranging from heavy metal to commercial TV jingles and we've finally picked one. Sidney Iwanter, from FOX, thought this show should be skewed (as they say in TV terms) to older viewers. He wanted younger kids to understand it, but he didn't want to be

GRAZ Entertainment

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WIDE ON JUBILEE
— But suddenly she
— fires a plasma energy blast from both hands, as she
— BACKPEDALS!

**PLASMA BLASTS
EXPLODE ON!**
SENTINEL!
THIS STOPS
HIS FORWARD
MOTION!

DAG PAN UP AS THE
SENTINEL
STANDS
UP

condescending. He didn't want it to be a typical Saturday morning TV show theme, so that's why the music is very important.



The Steve Lightle cover for the first issue of the monthly X-MEN ANIMATED SERIES comic book.

MA: Are there going to be any lyrics beyond X-Men, X-Men, X-Men... (laughter)

BH: As far as I know, no lyrics. That could change.

MA: There are no writers from the comic books working on the TV series, right?

BH: Wrong — both Larry Houston and Will Meugnot used to write for Marvel. And the other writers seem to

be familiar with the stories. (Enter Wolverine writer Larry Hama.) Hello, Larry!

MA: Is there continuity between the episodes?

BH: Yes — all thirteen episodes are linked. The Beast gets captured by the U.S. government because of a situation in the first episode and his trial — his whole arrest — becomes a theme for the entire series which wraps up in the 13th episode, so there is a flow from week to week, which is, again, what they're trying to do — maintain that comic book feel as closely as possible.

MA: Any particular storylines you liked a lot.

BH: What I liked a lot was the introduction of Callisto because it came right from the books. They did a good job with that. Oh, they're all fun and exciting. Larry, (Hama) say something.

LARRY: Is this public radio, NPR? (laughter)

...For the first few episodes (they've) taken a whole overview of the X-Men and tried to convey it to the viewers who have never heard of the X-Men.

MA: Will you get to see a finished product before it airs?

BH: I hope so. I want another trip to L.A. (laughter)

MA: Will you not forget to take your faithful assistant along? (more laughter) Will it be publicly previewed before it airs?

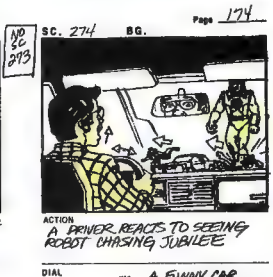
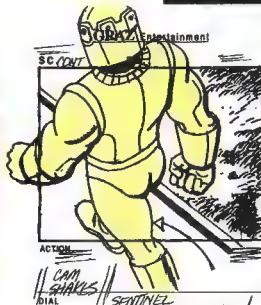
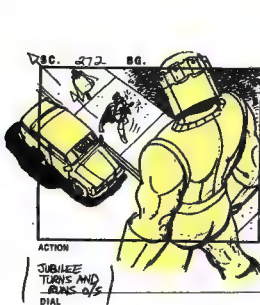
BH: I would think, if they get it in time. Maybe show clips of the show at the San Diego Comic Con this summer. Seems like that would be something they wouldn't want to miss out on.

MA: On to the future... about the Marvel comic book adaptation...

BH: We'll be adapting the 13 episodes in a separate comic book series that will not, of course, be official Marvel continuity. We've got the scripts and we have an artist assigned whose name I don't know. Ralph Macchio will be doing the scripts — Andrew Wildman — Scott Lobdell, famous writer of the X-Men who knows everything. (laughter) — just informed me of the artist's name.

MA: Great. Well, I think that about wraps it up. Thanks, Bob.

— Suzanne Gaffney



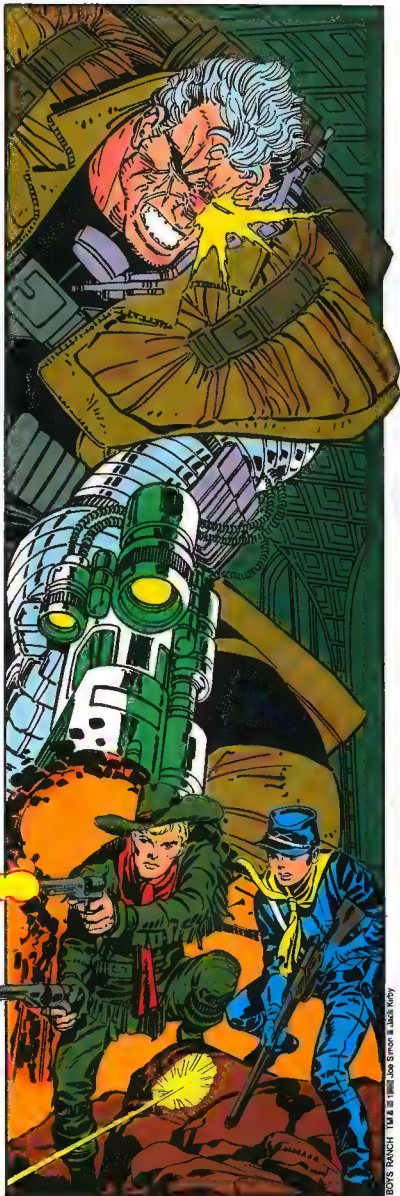
Hot Sheet

July... A month for rockets glowing and bombs bursting as the United States celebrates one of its most important events — the day the Marvel comics hit the shelf. And unlike Independence Day, this grand day comes once a week. So, in that tradition of giving you something great at the end of each week, this "Hot Sheet" will take a look at what's happening with some of Marvel's main-line characters. (Now don't worry, those of you who look to The Sheet as a way to keep track of special projects, we'll run a few of those up the flag pole as well.)

One character who created a lot of fireworks when he took control of a group of young super-heroes is everyone's favorite big-gun-toting mutant, Cable. This hard-nosed freedom fighter has been a mainstay of X-FORCE (nee THE NEW MUTANTS) for years now, but his murky origins have left readers begging for clues to his past. Well, come this summer, you'll be able to crack the mystery surrounding Cable for yourself. First, you'll have a chance to go back and take a look at his debut in the CABLE TRADE PAPERBACK. This 176-page volume collects the all important NEW MUTANTS issues #87-#94, in which author Louise Simonson and artist Rob Liefeld treat us to Cable's explosive shoot-first, forget the questions arrival. This early July release will represent one of the most important events in recent Marvel history and, according to Cosmic Comics owner Brian Schur, "it should whet the appetite of all the fans waiting in anticipation of the CABLE mini-series."

"The CABLE mini-series!" you shout. That's right! In August, writer Fabian Nicieza teams with John Romita, Jr., and Dan Green for an all-new two-issue look at Cable's hazy beginnings. Is he from the future or the past? Is he here to liberate mutant-kind or set fire to their cause? So many questions, quite a few answers and tons of beautiful art are sure to make comic shops look like huge traffic jams when this one hits the shelves. Shelton Drum, President of the North Carolina chain, *Heroes Aren't Hard To Find*, is bracing himself for the rush. "We're starting to hear a lot about John Romita, Jr.'s CABLE Limited Series. Romita's work on PUNISHER WAR ZONE shows us that CABLE will be awesome. When it comes to big guns, JR can draw 'em."

Speaking of drawing guns, Marvel shoots another bullseye this summer with the 208-page hardcover BOYS' RANCH. Before super-heroes took center stage in comic-dom, diversity was king — Jack "King" Kirby that is! In the 1950's, Kirby joined forces with Captain America co-creator Joe Simon to bring the Wild West to life in all it's "rootin'-tootin'" glory. This stunning reprint of some of comic history's finest work is important for a host of reasons. "Today's fans," points out Gary Colabruzzo, CEO of Chicago's *Moondog's Comics* chain, "look upon comics from the Golden Age as usually just crude attempts at story telling. But when they get a chance to see BOYS' RANCH from the legendary team of Joe Simon and Jack Kirby, they'll understand that the best of the Golden Age can more than hold their own against anything that



BOYS' RANCH: 1A & 1B: Joe Simon & Jack Kirby

today's best talents can produce. The artwork is explosive and yet the story flows from panel to panel with a smoothness often missing from today's comics." Tom DeFalco, Marvel's Editor-In-Chief, struck a similar cord when he viewed **BOYS' RANCH** significance from a comic creator's stand-point. "**BOYS' RANCH**," notes DeFalco, "features the sort of classical material which inspired today's professionals to join the comic book industry." Ultimately, **BOYS' RANCH** will be a hard book to miss once it hits stores, compelling readers to pick it up.

Man to their ranks. Fans will not want to miss out on this historic turning point. "We're very excited about 'The Death of Tony Stark,'" exclaims *Heroes Aren't Hard To Find's* Shelton Drum, "and we expect **IRON MAN** will get new life from this undertaking. This project brings to mind the recent changes in **THOR**." Brian Schur agrees. "This has all the makings of a hit: the death of Tony Stark, a new Iron Man, and a new creative team should make this book hot! This will be an excellent starting place for new readers." **DEATHLOK** editor Tom Breavor



States Buddy Saunders of Texas' *Lone Star Comics*, "...it's exactly the kind of material we love to see: excellent material published in a high-quality, but affordable, format. Since a mint run of this series would cost close to a thousand dollars, very few fans can enjoy this classic work in its original form. If production on this book is comparable to the **CAPTAIN AMERICA** and **FIGHTING AMERICAN** [hardcover reprint] editions, it should be a real treat."

Turning our attentions once again to what is happening in today's Marvel Universe, there is some sad news which needs to be reported: as of **IRON MAN #284** Tony Stark is dead. Tragical, true, but that's not quite the whole story. Oh, to be sure, the world at large will view Stark's video-will and be convinced of his passing, convinced enough that even his best friend Rhodey agrees to take up the mantle of Iron Man once more, but you and I will know different. **IRON MAN** editor Nel Yomtov helps clear up some of the confusion. "The degenerative central nervous system disease [that Stark has had for quite a while now] has left him in a weakened, highly deteriorated state and his options are limited to one: risk undergoing a cryogenic freeze while surgeons perform an untested operation to reverse the damage. Stark believes his chances of survival will be enhanced if the world believes he has died." To be sure, the apparent death of Tony Stark, as brought to you by the creative team of Len Kaminski (who made his **IRON MAN** writer debut during the hit "Galactic Storm" storyline) and artists Kevin Hopgood and Bob Wiacek will have ramifications across the entire Marvel Universe. His Avengers compatriots will mourn as they attempt to deal with the passing of a friend and the introduction of a new Iron

takes an even stronger stand: "**IRON MAN** has suddenly become very interesting and action packed. People need to start paying more attention to this series; it's going to be a book to watch."

In August, another major Marvel character will also have a brush with death. Spider-Man, who a few years ago saw the passing of one of his most stalwart foes, Kraven The Hunter, finds that he must once again deal with the villain's obsession in **SPIDER-MAN: SOUL OF THE HUNTER**. This powerful story is written by J.M. DeMattaie, with artwork by Mike Zeck and Bob McLeod, and is a direct sequel to their classic "Kraven's Last Hunt" story. This book is sure to mean a lot of things to a lot of people. Reminisces Gary Colabuono, "You know, Spider-Man is still my favorite Marvel hero. But not since **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #248** ('The Kid Who Collected Spider-Man') has a story moved me as much as **SPIDER-MAN: THE SOUL OF THE HUNTER**. It's a powerful story that can be appreciated on many levels other than simply fisticuffs. This story is destined to become a classic." The staff of *Lone Star Comics* in Texas echoed these sentiments. "We're looking forward to **SPIDER-MAN: SOUL OF THE HUNTER**." In fact, one *Lone Star* employee described it as "One of the best Spider-Man stories I've ever read."

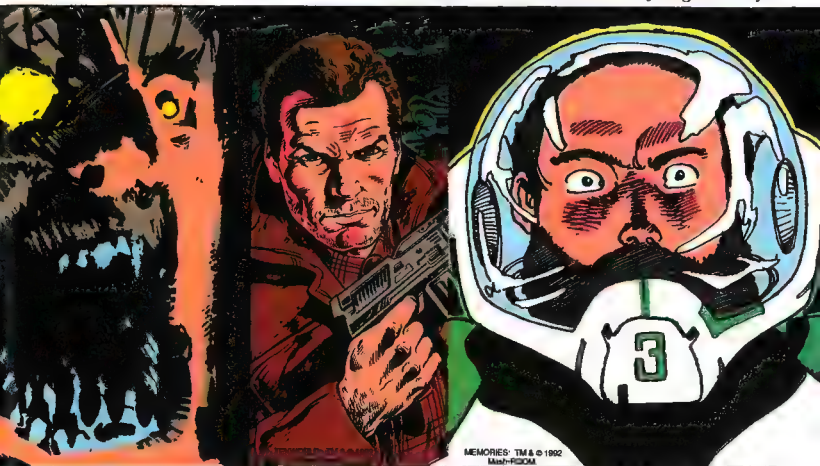
With so many other great releases slated for the summer, it's time once again to take a quick tour around the Marvel Universe to see what other great things there are to expect. Fabian Nicieza, known to many as writer on many X-projects and one of 1990's hottest releases, **NEW WARRIORS**, wants to be sure that fans keep an eye on some other key Marvel books. "Other than the books I edit [which include **BILL AND TED'S EXCELLENT**

COMIC BOOK and WONDER MAN), I'm really enjoying PUNISHER WAR ZONE. Chuck (Dixon), John (Romita, Jr.) and Klaus (Janson) have worked up a timely story filled with mood and imagination." Speaking of mood and Fabian, Tom DeFalco dares anyone to miss NEW WARRIORS #27 "in which we get to see Dark Speedball — an event nobody has asked for, but they'll be glad they got it!"

There are also some dark things happening outside of the Marvel Universe this summer. In Epic's HELLRAISER

ONYX OVERLORD, which is actually a book that crosses all international boundaries.

THE ONYX OVERLORD continues French writer/artist Moebius' "Airtight Garage" series. Plotted by Moebius, dialogued by RJM Lofficier, and drawn by Jerry Bingham, THE ONYX OVERLORD offers the best in craftsmanship from around the world. Notes Steve Gursky of *Steve's Comic Relief*, "Moebius is one of the most respected artists in the world. This time, . . . he has turned the art chores over to Jerry Bingham. Jerry's



SUMMER SPECIAL, Dan Chichester and a host of others ask every Junior High School student most hated essay question, "What I Did On My Summer Vacation." Notes Chris Cooper, assistant editor on GHOST RIDER and the other Rise of the Midnight Sons titles, "I've worked with Dan on NIGHT STALKERS, so I know he has a twisted imagination. I'm looking forward to something really warped in the HELLRAISER SUMMER SPECIAL."

Epic Comics also has a very special series debut planned for July, WILLIAM SHATNER'S TEKORLD. Based on Shatner's best selling science-fiction novel *Tekwar*, TEKORLD takes place in the year 2120 on the gritty streets of a futuristic Los Angeles. This hard-boiled detective series, written by Ron Goulart (under Shatner's supervision), with art by Lee Sullivan, follows the vendetta of ex-cop Jake Cardigan as he hunts for the slime who framed him for selling an addictive brain stimulant known as "Tek." An industry buzz has already started surrounding this project. "William Shatner has 25-years of fan appeal working for him," notes Cliff Biggers of Georgia's *Dr. No's Comics*, "so I really expect TEK WORLD to sizzle this summer on that basis alone. The Shatner novels that inspired the series have been very well-received, and the Lee Sullivan artwork should be a real crowd-pleaser; Sullivan has a flair for science-fiction."

Finally, even though July is a time when most of us in the United States are celebrating this country's independence, it's good to keep in mind that America is made up of many different cultures. And in a way, so are comic books. Three very good examples of comics which originated on other shores are DIGITEK (out of the United Kingdom), MEMORIES (from Japan), and THE

layouts make this a faced paced, energetic story. . . "

MEMORIES, from Japanese writer/artist Katsuhiro Otomo (of AKIRA fame), is a serene space tale with stellar twists and turns when the crew of a drifting spaceship finds a mummified corpse which may just hold the answers to the secrets of the universe. As Gursky points out, "The artwork flows beautifully. Otomo doesn't clutter the art with too much dialogue — just enough to move the story and the reader along."

DIGITEK, on the other hand, is a slam-bang science-fiction/super-hero series which promises to take readers on quite a fantastic ride, not only through the world's computer networks, but through life and death and universes beyond. IRON MAN editor Nel Yomtov, no stranger to techno-heroes, warns fans not to miss this limited series. "DIGITEK writers John Tomlinson and Andy Lanning are incredible techno-buffs with a great track record, from Tomlinson's work on KNIGHTS OF PENDRAGON to Lanning's PUNISHER bi-weekly series "Euro-Hit." These two are going to make a great impression on U.S. readers with this series. And with Dermot Powers' fully-painted art, this book can't help but be a hit." Cliff Biggers concurs. "DIGITEK is the best looking Marvel UK production yet! A hot concept, hot artwork, and a great deal of fan interest following the success of other Marvel UK books — DIGITEK has everything going for it!"

So with all of these great books to get you through the summer, what's not to celebrate! Now let's get out there and have some real fun in the sun: baseball, swimming, and tanning with a stack of Marvels!

— Jerry Novick

PRINT IT OR DIE!

Send your letters to: MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, c/o Marvel Comics Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.

Attention correspondents: All letters to be considered for publication must include your complete name and address, though we will gladly withhold that info on request!

This month's gritty, realistic letter column title is short, to the point, and only slightly threatening. It comes to us from Aaron Wood of Airdrie, Canada. 'Preciate it, Aaron! After all, if you can't be threatened by friends, who can you be threatened by?

Before we go ahead and remind

everyone else out there to send in gritty, realistic titles of their own, we've got a slightly different request for y'all. The suggestion has been made that after years of rotating titles, it's about time that we gave this column a permanent name of it's own. So we decided to throw the question open to you: Would you rather see the MARVEL AGE letter column get a single name that it could call its own, or would you prefer to see us continue our policy of finding a newer and niftier title each month? The decision's going to be made pretty soon, and your opinions really are going to help us make up our minds. So don't delay;

vote early, and vote often!

Hmm... Not much elbow room this time around, what with our having been squeezed into a measly two pages and all. Guess that's what happens when you're just bursting at the seams with news, huh?

Still, to be on the safe side, we'd better jump right into this issue's LETTER OF THE MONTH, that lucky letter that we've pulled out of our mountain of mail because we think it'll be of particular interest to Marvelites far and wide. Just be careful not to slip on the spiffy yellow background, okay? We'd hate to see you hurt yourselves.

Dear MARVEL AGE,

Marvel Comics has been my favorite comics group since I started reading comics in 1986. My favorite titles range from TRANSFORMERS to THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN and CAPTAIN AMERICA. Through these titles, I have also linked onto other of your comics, including X-MEN, THE PUNISHER, and the newest Spider-Man offspring, SPIDER-MAN.

However, when I reached the last few pages of SPIDER-MAN #10, I was rather concerned about the situation of Wolverine smoking. I understand that Wolverine smoking only adds to the mood and maturity of a story, but are you willing to risk losing some readers because of this? Not only is smoking bad for your health, but a super hero who has athletic abilities and also smokes is rather ironic, don't you think?

To further my point, let us consider a certain age group of Marvel readers, the younger impressionable readers.

Younger age groups are a large percentage of your readers. When they get involved with characters such as Spider-Man, Captain America, the Hulk, and Wolverine, they look upon such characters as role models — "fighters of evil," "defenders of peace, truth, and justice (the American way)." When they see such things as super heroes smoking, what do you think they might say or do? "Wow, it's cool, Wolverine's smokin'."

Being seventeen, I think that this would be

more permissible if he was a bad guy or in a comic book for mature readers, but in a regular comic book (an excellent comic book, might I say), it's inappropriate.

I hope you can rectify this problem in the future, as we, the future, need to be influenced by these super role models in a right way. The healthy way.

Thank you for listening to what I have to say. Do you read all the mail you receive?

Micheal Whittington
58 Flinders Avenue
Killarney Vale, NSW 2261
Australia

Yup, Michael, we sure do. We may not be able to print (or even answer) every letter we receive, but we read and pay attention to every single one. Which brings us to the points that you raise in your letter.

We agree with you that while Wolverine certainly has a number of

positive and heroic qualities, he is not what you might call an ideal role model for small children. He smokes. He drinks beer. He impales people with razor-sharp claws. None of these are traits that we'd particularly like to see imitated by the youth of America.

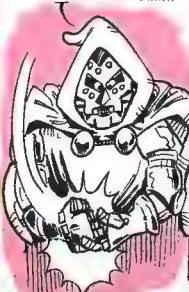
The thing is, though, that when the Marvel Age of Comics began, lo those many years ago, one of the concepts that it pioneered was heroes who acted like real people. They got sick, they didn't always win, and they made mistakes. Wolverine's smoking (or that of the Thing, Nick Fury, and occasional pipe smoker Reed Richards, for that matter goes along with that idea. Should Wolverine smoke? Is it a good idea for him to smoke? Should anybody ever smoke? Of course not. But like the rest us, Logan doesn't always do what he should.

By the way, while it doesn't negate any of your points, you may be interested to note that Wolverine's mutant healing factor protects him from the harmful effects of tobacco and alcohol. Naturally, the rest of us don't have the benefit of such powers. So in case there's anybody out there who still has any doubts about our position on the matter, here it is:

DON'T DO IT!!!!!!
All clear?

Making the Marvel Universe "Politically Correct"...

WE ARE NOT
VILLAINS!!.....



WE ARE... "GOODNESS-
IMPAIRED PERSONS"!



WE WAS
CHAST
FOLLOWING
ORDERS!
HONEST!



HOLLYWOOD, CA—Marvel mastermind Stan Lee made a recent guest appearance on the nationally syndicated Dennis Miller Show where the twosome talked about all things Marvel including Spider-Man's 30th anniversary this summer. Here Miller, a self-admitted Marvel fan, shows a copy of "The Spectacular Spider-Man #189" to his studio audience as well as to his avid viewers at home.

Dear "I Heard It through the Webline,"

I always enjoy myself reading it, but I really think you should include more information on what's happening in Marvel. Only a tiny (very tiny bit of information was given on Operation Galactic Storm. Other than that, MARVEL AGE is really doing fine. My friends and I always enjoy ourselves reading the calendar. Keep up the good work!

K. Brennan
824 Liberty St. Ext.
Warren, PA 16365

To tell you the truth, K., we're not completely sure whether you meant that you'd like to see more news in our letter column specifically or in MARVEL AGE as a whole. If you meant MARVEL AGE, then we think you're going to be pleased, what with upcoming photo features on [Steve: insert whatever preview of the next couple of issues you want], on top of all our usual features, previews, and inside info.

As for the letter column, we're more than happy to supply info on topics ranging from the in's and out's of comics publishing to upcoming comic books to the names of Peter Parker's parents. And if you've simply been giving a lot of thought to any non-comics subject lately, we'd love to hear that too.

As we've said before, this is your column, folks, so what we put in it — news or otherwise — is up to you. Isn't democracy wonderful?

And having reaffirmed everyone's sense of freedom and personal choice, it's time to exercise some of our own and welcome in our monthly...



Yup, it's time once again to check in with the few, the proud, and the wild as they pass along some not-so-secret messages to their fellow agents while letting everyone else listen in on the fun. If you'd like to join in the WAM Jam yourself, simply send us a letter on official WAM stationery or include your WAM I.D. number in your letter. Sure beats schlepping microfilm around in your belt buckle, doesn't it?

Dear Marvel,

I have one question, and it concerns a big part of Marvel continuity that is seemingly being ignored, so I figured this letter would be best sent to MARVEL AGE.

Why is virtually every writer in the Marvel Universe ignoring Walt Simonson's amazing work on THE FANTASTIC FOUR? Besides the fact that it was excellently well done material, several well-done changes were made in Marvel continuity, and no one seems to be paying attention to them.

First of all, in issues #350-352 of THE FANTASTIC FOUR, it was clearly established that the Dr. Doom we knew and loved was not the true Doom. The real Doom returned from a long sojourn into space and time in a new suit of silver armor, hundreds of times more diabolical than he had ever been. This was Doom the way he always should've been done. But this "true" Doom making appear-

ances across the Marvel Universe. Don't you think that after returning to Earth and observing how much his proteges screwed up, Doom would do a little house cleaning and make some new schemes of his own? I eagerly await this Doom's return, although I doubt if it's going to happen.

Second, in the storyline immediately following Doom's "return," the Fantastic Four were placed under arrest by the Time Variance Authority for violating laws concerning the manipulation of time-space. To escape their destruction at the hands of the T.V.A., Reed Richards designed a virus program and inserted it into the mainframe of the T.V.A. computers, erasing all records of the Marvel timeline. Yet, what do I read about one of the upcoming, time-hopping Marvel U.K. books? That the T.V.A. is making a guest appearance! Come on, guys!

I hope for once, Marvel will do its best to clean up these drastic errors, for Walt Simonson's work was too good to be negated by a lot of strange Doom vs. Moon Knight and Marvel U.K. stories.

Nick "Copycat" Jahr
(Address withheld by request)

Geek, Nick, we don't know that we'd say that other writers have ignored Walt's run on F.F. We passed your questions along to FANTASTIC FOUR editor Ralph Macchio, and he suggested that you might want to check out the Doctor Doom back-up story that appeared in FF #387 (the thirtieth anniversary issue). In that story, we got our first look at Doom's Ministry of Information, which is devoted to making sure that people interpret history the way he wants them to. In short, the "Doctor Doom" who turned up in most of Doom's appearances may not have been the real one, but on the other hand, it might have been this Doctor Doom who wasn't telling the truth. Doom's a pretty tricky guy, so we guess we'll just have to wait and see in order to learn the truth.

As for the T.V.A., Ralph confirms that Reed did indeed erase their knowledge of the Marvel Universe timeline. So how can they turn up in a Marvel U.K. book? Simple — that story takes place *before* the fateful FF tale. Sorry if you were confused by the order of events, but hey, that's what happens when you deal with guys who live outside the timestream.

And speaking of living outside the timestream, it looks like we'd better duck out of it ourselves for another month. So until next time, keep your powder dry and don't take any wooden Doctor Doooms, hear?

checklist

COMING ATTRACTIONS CHECKLIST — AUG 1992

FIRST WEEK

ALIEN LEGION: GRIMROD 4.95
AVENGERS #354 1.25

Avengers vs. the all-new Grim Reaper and the Legion of the Unliving.

AVENGERS WEST COAST #87 1.25
CAGE #7 1.25

"The Evil and The Cure" part 3 of 4. Guest starring Avengers West Coast.

CAPTAIN AMERICA #408 1.25
Reunited with Diamondback, Cap must battle the Red Skull and the Skeleton Crew.

DAREDEVIL #309 1.25
DD, the Punisher & Nomad unmask the evil master behind the organized crim ring. "Dead Man's Hand" part 7 of 9.

DIGITEK #2 1.75
Deathlok teams up with Digitek to battle the villainous hordes of the Bacillicons.

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #112 1.50

Featuring Wolverine, Ghost Rider, the Infinity Watch and Wonder Man.

MEMORIES 2.25
From the creator of AKIRA, Katsuhiro Otomo, an all new sci-fi epic.

NAMOR #31 1.25
The avenging son of Atlantis battles the evil lord of Latveria: Dr. Doom!

NIGHT THRASHER #1 2.00
From the pages of NEW WARRIORS, Night Thrasher steps out in his very own four issue limited series.

NOMAD #6 1.75
Nomad vs. the Slug. Guest starring DD & the Punisher.

ORIGINAL GHOST RIDER #4 1.75
Blaze is caught in the middle between Satan, Crash Simpson & Medicine Man.

PUNISHER ARMORY #4 2.00
SHE-HULK #44 1.75

SPIDER-MAN: SOUL OF THE HUNTER TPB 5.95
The sequel to the KRAVEN'S LAST HUNT tpb. By J.M. DeMatets & Mike Zeck.

TERROR, INC. #4 1.75
TOXIC CRUSADERS #6 1.25

UNCANNY X-MEN #293 1.25
Callisto kidnaps Colossus' brother Mikhail and the shocking secret

of Archangel's wings is revealed.

WARLOCK #6 2.50
Reprinting Warlock's classic battle with Thanos. Guest starring the Thing, Avengers and Spider-Man. Written and penciled by Jim Starlin.

WCW WRESTLING #7 1.25
The Stelner Brothers against wrestlers from another dimension.

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #93 1.25
Spidey vs. the Hobgoblin. Guest starring Moon Knight.

SECOND WEEK

ALPHA FLIGHT #113 1.75
The secret of Guardians suit revealed.

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #367 1.25
Spidey faces off against Taskmaster and his boss, the heinous Red Skull.

BARBIE #22 1.25
Barbie and Christie travel to Greece.

BILL & TED'S EXCELLENT COMIC BOOK #11 1.25

Bill and Ted travel back in time to save the life of their most excellent bud, Abe Lincoln.

CABLE #1 4.95
Special two issue limited series pitting Cable against Stryfe. Written by Fabian Nicieza and pencilled by John Romita, Jr.

CAPTAIN PLANET #12 1.25



DARKHOLD #1 2.75
Premier double-sized issue with fold-out poster & polybagging.

GHOST RIDER #30 1.75
The Spirit of Vengeance battles Nightmare over the mind of Dan Ketch.

GROO THE WANDERER #94 2.25
GROO DYNASTY TPB 8.95

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #29 1.25
The Guardians battle their evil

twins over present-day Avengers' mansion.

CLIVE BARKER'S HELLRAISER #16 4.95

The birth of Morte Mammie; Leviathan's most hated nemesis.

MARVEL SUPER HERO SPECIAL #11 2.50
METROPOL A.D. #1 2.95

Premier of an all new Ted McKeever three issue limited series.

MOON KNIGHT SPECIAL 2.50
Moon Knight & Shang-Chi, the Master of Kung Fu battle an evil cult.

ONYX OVERLORD #1 2.50
Moebius & R.J.M. Lofficier team up for a tale of a futuristic world threatened by an evil conqueror.

PENDRAGON II #4 1.75
PUNISHER/CAPTAIN AMERICA: BLOOD AND GLORY #1 5.95

PUNISHER WAR ZONE #8 1.75
Frank Castle returns to the spot where the Punisher was born.

QUASAR #39 1.25
Deathrue returns with the power of the Ultimate Nullifier.

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #202 2.25
SILVER SABLE #5 1.25

The Wild Pack tries to rescue Sable as she fights for her life in Castle Doom.

SLEEPWALKER #17 1.25
Continued from DARKHAWK #20. The Brotherhood of Evil Mutants presents Sleepy from returning to the Mindscape. Guest starring Spider-Man and Darkhawk.

WOLVERINE #62 1.75
Is Sabretooth really Wolverine's father? The shocking truth revealed.

WONDER MAN #14 1.25
Wondy confronts Warlock and his new partner: Thanos.

THIRD WEEK

AVENGERS #355 1.25
BLOODLINES: TALES FROM THE HEART OF AFRICA 4.95

The drama that is South Africa, as faced by the heroes of the Peace Corps.

CONAN #261 1.25
EXCALIBUR #55 1.75

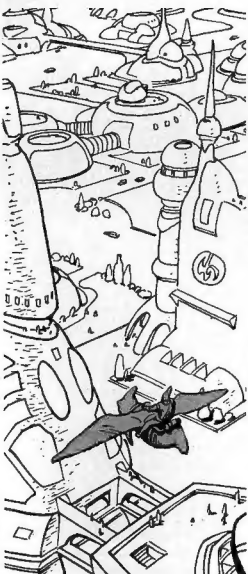
"The Haunting of Braddock Manor" part 1. Guest starring the X-Men's Psylocke.

FISH POLICE #1 1.25
Re-printing the cult classic comic created by Steve Moncuse.

G.I. JOE #129 1.25
Cobra Commander plots a new scheme to annihilate the Joes.

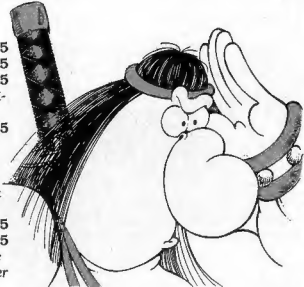
HELL'S ANGEL #4 1.75
Special guest stars: The X-Men.

INCREDIBLE HULK #398 1.25
The Hulk & the Pantheon battle the Leader. "Ghost of the Past" part 2.



FOURTH WEEK

BARBIE FASHION #22	1.25
CONAN SAGA #67	2.25
DEATHLOK #16	1.75
<i>Deathlok is stalked by his nefarious double, Evtlok.</i>	
DR. STRANGE #46	1.75
<i>The Scarlet Witch, Dr. Druid, Shaman & Agatha Harkness help Dr. Strange fight a mystic battle to prevent the Magus from dominating the Earth.</i>	
FANTASTIC FOUR #369	\$1.25
INFINITY GAUNTLET TPB	19.95
<i>Collecting last summer's 6 issue INFINITY GAUNTLET blockbuster series.</i>	
INFINITY WAR #5	2.50
<i>With the Infinity Gauntlet in his possession, the only way to stop the Magus is to use the Ultimate Nullifier.</i>	
IRON MAN #285	1.25
<i>Tony Stark's funeral erupts into chaos as several super villains come to pay their respects.</i>	
JAMES BOND, JR. #10	1.25
KID 'N' PLAY #9	1.25
<i>Play's break-up with Shawna drives him to pizza-induced nightmares.</i>	
MARVEL REQUIRER #31	\$2.50
MARVEL UNIVERSE	
HANDBOOK #23	\$4.50
MOON KNIGHT #43	1.75
<i>MK battles his evil doppelganger high atop Four Freedom Plaza.</i>	
MOTORMOUTH #5	1.75
<i>Special guest stars, Excalibur and the X-Men's Archangel.</i>	
NEW WARRIORS #28	1.25
<i>Introducing Turbo — does she have what it takes to be a Warrior?</i>	
PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #47	
SILVER SURFER #73	1.25
<i>The Surfer, Nova & Firelord search for the remains of the Air-Walker.</i>	



SPECTACULAR

SPIDER-MAN #193	1.25
<i>The climactic conclusion to "Eye of the Puma."</i>	
SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE #3	1.75
<i>Blaze & GR track down a demon hell-bent to destroy the world.</i>	
THE 'NAM #73	1.75
<i>Ed Marks, Tex Mex and Rocket Man return for Part 1 of "Siege at An Lok."</i>	
THOR #452	1.25
<i>The Stunning Sif & Balder the Brave search for the real Thor in the realm of Mephisto.</i>	
WARHEADS #5	1.75
<i>Special guest stars X-Force and Death's Head II.</i>	
WHAT THE?! #22	1.25
WILLIAM SHATNER'S	
TEKWORLD #2	1.50
<i>Continuing the comic adaptation of the Shatner smash best-seller, TEK WAR.</i>	
X-FORCE #15	1.25
<i>Cable vs. Deadpool. Plus, will X-Force rescue Sunspot from Gideon?</i>	
X-MEN CLASSIC #76	1.25
<i>The X-Men travel to attend Wolverine's wedding.</i>	

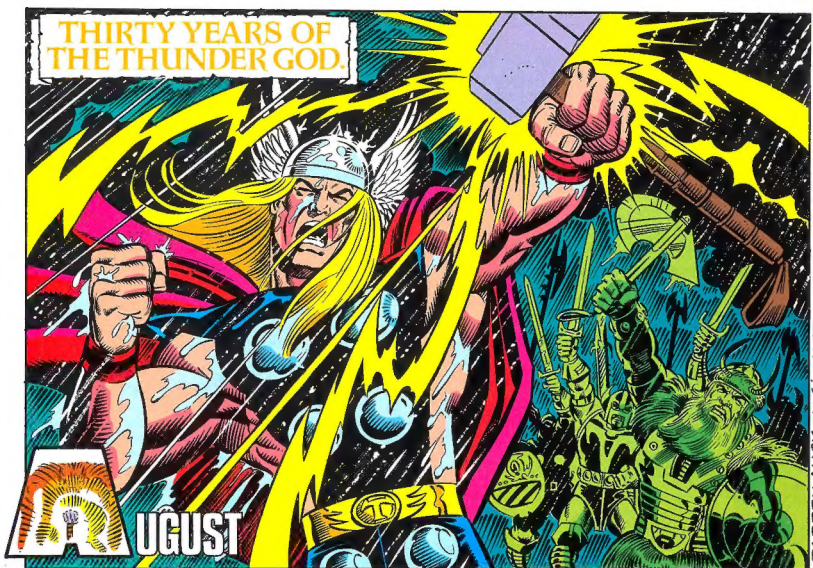
MARVEL AGE #117	1.00
<i>Marvel Age explores the Marvel Universe in the year 2099.</i>	
MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #113	1.50
<i>A quartet of tales featuring: Wolverine, Ghost Rider, Werewolf by Night and Giant Man vs. Goliath.</i>	
MARVEL TALES #266	1.25
<i>Classic reprint: Spidey returns home after the Secret Wars in a mysterious new black costume.</i>	
MORBIUS #2	1.75
<i>Desperately seeking a cure, the living vampire encounters Peter Parker.</i>	
NICK FURY AGENT OF SHIELD #40	1.75
<i>"Cold War of Nick Fury" part 3 of 4.</i>	
NIGHTBREED #20	2.25
PUNISHER #71	1.25
SPIDER-MAN #27	2.95
<i>Part 1 of a special two issue story by BLACK PANTHER's Don Macgregor.</i>	
WARLOCK & THE INFINITY WATCH #9	1.75
<i>Gamora must save Eternity from the Magus!</i>	
WHAT IF? #42	1.25
<i>"What If Spider-Man Had Kept His Extra Arms?"</i>	
X-FACTOR #83	1.25
X-MEN #13	1.25
<i>Prof. X faces the mad mutant, Hazard, to learn his own father's true identity.</i>	

NEXT ISSUE :

The first look at the *Marvel 2099* universe, including the exclusive, behind-the-scenes *Marvel 2099* comic strip — available only in *MARVEL AGE*. Plus the *NIGHTSTALKERS*, Marvel's collectible Spider-Man fund-raiser for UNICEF, how the Skybox *Marvel Masterpieces* trading cards are created, and the latest *Hot Sheet* — all in *MARVEL AGE #117*.



THIRTY YEARS OF THE THUNDER GOD.



UGUST

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

**"WHOSOEVER HOLDS THIS HAMMER,
IF HE BE WORTHY, SHALL POSSESS
THE POWER OF...**THOR.**"**

NEW THIS MONTH: **CABLE #1** (LIMITED SERIES)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
JESUS "WHITEY"
GONZALEZ

ORIGIN OF ORIGINAL
GHOST RIDER, MARVEL SPOTLIGHT
#5, 1972

DEFENDERS DEBUT 1972

DWAYNE TURNER
BOB McLEOD

CHRISTIE SCHEELE

NEW THIS MONTH:
DARKHOLD #1

JIM MOONEY

JOHN COSTANZA
JIMMY PALMIOTTI

NEW THIS MONTH:
MOON KNIGHT
SPECIAL

JOHN ROMITA, JR.
ALEX SAVIUK

GEORGE ROUSSOS

MARIE SEVERIN

NEW THIS MONTH:
SAM AND MAX

TERRY AUSTIN

24

S.H.I.E.L.D. DEBUTS IN STRANGE TALES
#135, 1985

JACK KIRBY

RICK PARKER

HECTOR COLLAZO

30

31

27

28

29

DARREN ALICK